



A Comprehensive
Subsurface Investigation
at
**Magnolia
Plantation**

including parcels of timber
which contains 23 arpens

38⁰⁰/₁₀₀ arpens 32¹/₄ acres
No. 6.

Bennie C. Keel

with contributions by
Christina E. Miller
Marc A. Tiemann

Southeast Archeological Center
Tallahassee, Florida
1999

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Keel, Miller, and Tiemann

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*16NA295
Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches, Louisiana*

SEAC Accession 1224



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National Park Service
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Southeast Archeological Center

The Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) is a support operation of the National Park Service's Southeast Region. In assisting parks with their cultural resource management needs, SEAC facilitates long-term protection of archeological resources and compiles and utilizes the archeological information obtained from these resources. In addition to annually generating numerous archeological reports, as mandated by federal law and park operations, SEAC is the repository for over six million artifacts that make up the Southeast Region's research collections and contribute to its cultural database. SEAC is staffed by professional NPS archeologists and regularly employs archeology students from Florida State University and other anthropology programs throughout the Southeast.

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days plagued with chiggers and poison ivy. Marc Tiemann served as crew chief and was largely responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the project in both the field and laboratory phases. I consider myself fortunate to have been associated with him on this project.

The crew and other SEAC staff conducted the laboratory work and prepared many aspects of this report. Jennifer Thomason created all the line drawings; Jeff Jones did the photographic work; Tanya Peres analyzed the faunal material; and Mike Worthen did the bulk of data entry. Chris Miller wrote the history section draft, while Marc Tiemann wrote a draft artifact analysis report. Much of their work has been incorporated into Chapters 1 and 4. Michael Meyer deserves recognition for his work during the survey stage of the project. He ran baselines and set temporary grid points across the plantation when it was largely covered with head-high Johnson grass. Dennis Finch, who was extremely helpful in all aspects of the database development and management, pro-

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Management Summary

Between June 3 and July 18, 1996, a Southeast Archeological Center crew expended some 2,527 person-hours conducting a comprehensive subsurface testing program over the entire eighteen acres of the Magnolia Plantation unit of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park. Data recovery excavations at Cabins 1 and 3 and at the slave hospital/overseer's house were completed during this period. Cabin 7 data recovery investigations were carried out in November 1996. This report covers only the testing program.

We conducted the investigations by following a research design (Keel 1996) that specifically insured that no archeologically significant resources would be adversely impacted by the planned stabilization projects and that baseline data would be accumulated characterizing the location, distribution, age, integrity, and significance of archeological deposits throughout the Magnolia Plantation unit. Additionally, we were able to correlate some archeological deposits with historic documents and provide data, as needed, to the planning effort.

The comprehensive auger testing program provides an understanding of the distribution of archeological remains at the park. The analysis of the materials and the context from which they came (see Chapters 4 and 5) compose a corpus of infor-

mation on which to base future archeological research, develop cultural resource management plans, and carry out compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. Suggestions for future research topics are found in Chapter 6.

The investigations provide information about the probable location of the structure housing the boiler and steam engine associated with the cotton gin. Architectural, engineering, historical, and archeological data all support the hypothesis that the gin house was built around 1890.

Archeological evidence suggests that the slave village was laid out in a grid pattern, four cabins across and six down for a total of twenty-four cabins. These were formally oriented in the cardinal directions. This slave village was reportedly the finest in the parish.

A complex of materials located between the slave hospital/overseer's house and the slave village represent the agency, mill, pigeonier, bell tower, and garden house.

Finally, the investigations suggest there was once a substantial domestic structure along Louisiana Highway 119 that was not recorded on G. S. Walmsley's 1858 plat of Magnolia Plantation. Although a precise date for construction, use, and abandonment cannot yet be determined, this structure could date as early as the 1830s.



Chapter 1

Introduction

Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Cane River National Heritage Area (Figure 1) were established on November 2, 1994, by Public Law 103-499 (16 U.S.C. 410cc). Among its findings, Congress stated that the Natchitoches area—settled by the French in 1714—is the oldest permanent European settlement in the Louisiana Purchase territory. The center for the development of Creole culture, Natchitoches is unique for having over three hundred publicly and privately owned Creole structures in both rural and urban settings. The large number and the integrity of these properties and a unique cooperative program between corporations, government agencies, and private parties offer the basis for a holistic approach to understanding the broad continuum of history within the region.

The legislation establishes the Cane River Creole National Historical Park (Title III, §302) and authorizes the acquisition of portions of Oakland and Magnolia Plantations, plus an additional ten acres of land for a visitor center complex. The Magnolia Plantation property was transferred to the National Park Service (NPS) on January 22, 1996. Purchase of the Oakland property was completed in late 1997. The legislation specifically provides for the use of cooperative agreements between the NPS and the owners of the Badin-Roque site and the Beau Fort, Cherokee, and Melrose Plantations within the Natchitoches National Historic Landmark District to promote historic preservation and interpretation (§304d).

Title IV of the law established Cane River National Heritage Area to complement the park and provide for a culturally sensitive approach to the preservation of the region's heritage. The heritage area encompasses a one-mile strip on both sides of the Cane River from Natchitoches to the vicinity of Monette's Ferry below Chopin, Louisiana. Although located outside this one-mile strip, Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Los Adaes, and Fort Jesup are

also identified in §304d and included in the heritage area. The Cane River Heritage Area Commission was established in §402 to help implement the provisions of the law by providing guidance, developing a management plan, entering into cooperative agreements, providing grants, and taking other actions that promote the purpose of the statute.

As required by §306, the NPS must prepare a General Management Plan (GMP) within three years after funds are made available. The plan will minimally address issues and topics related to visitor use, programs, and management actions that the NPS will undertake with the Commission. The plan will also address preservation and use plans for sites and structures.

PLANNING

The NPS has developed a comprehensive approach for planning the development, operation, interpretation, and conservation of its units. The acquisition of archeological data is one requirement. In addition to providing guidance for development, interpretation, and resource management, the data can fulfill other needs and requirements, such as compliance with Executive Order 11593; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended; the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA), as amended; and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), passed in 1990.

The creation of new, small- to moderate-sized National Park units offers the NPS the opportunity to acquire comprehensive baseline archeological data during development of the General Management Plan. Taking advantage of this opportunity helps avoid adding to the backlog of archeologically unsurveyed and unevaluated acres,

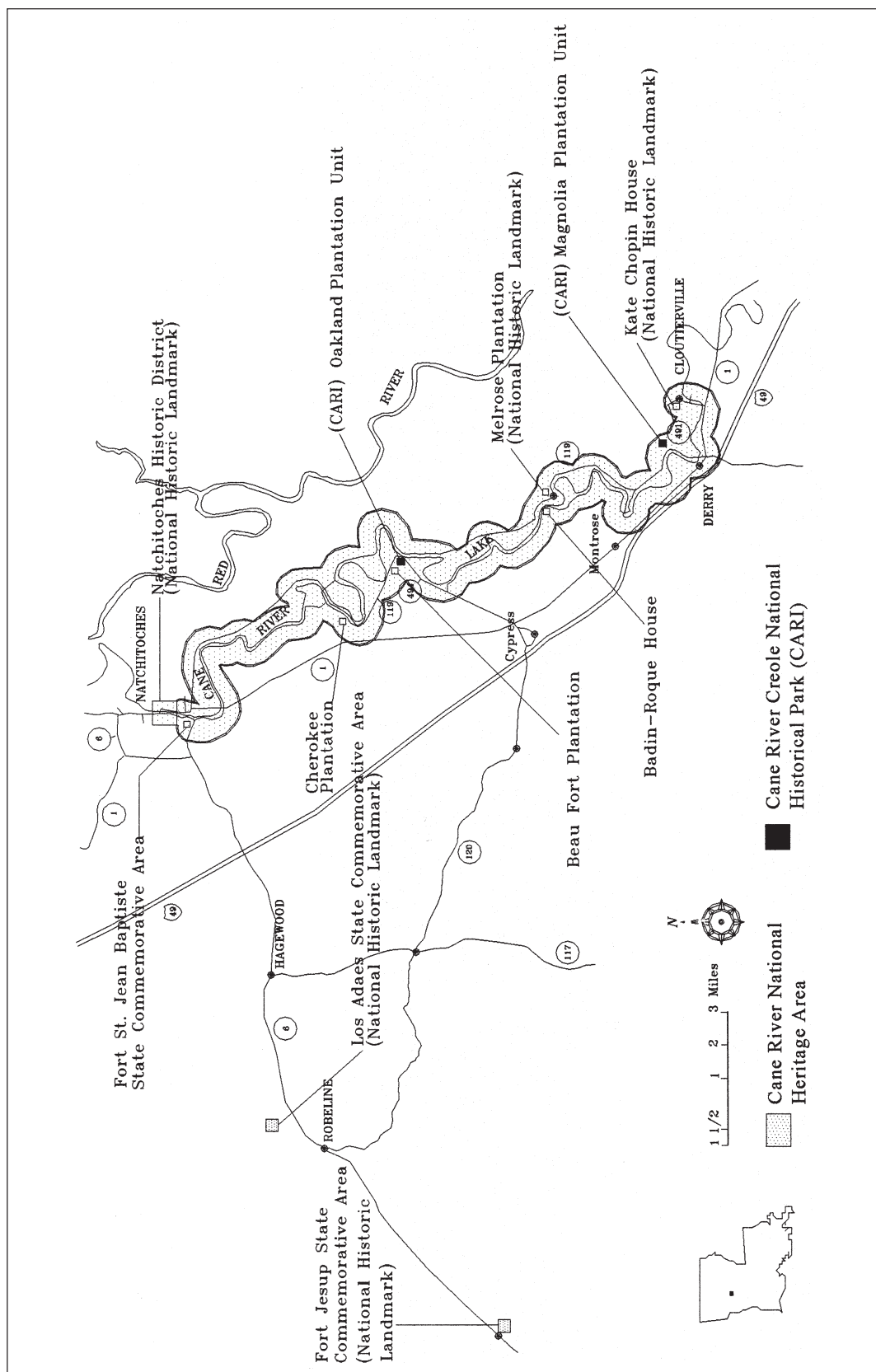


Figure 1 — Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI) and Cane River National Heritage Area.

which prompted the 1988 amendment to ARPA and the creation of the NPS's Systemwide Archeological Inventory Program (SAIP) (Aubry et al. 1992). Comprehensive archeological surveys, like the one described herein, are timely and cost efficient. They help avoid piecemeal, development-driven management approaches while complying with the statutes mentioned above.

My first involvement with Cane River Creole National Historical Park occurred on April 9, 1996, when I attended a meeting at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve in New Orleans to discuss the scope of the planning effort with park managers and planners. I outlined a plan for the archeological investigations necessary to acquire data to fulfill planning requirements and comply with other NPS statutory responsibilities. My recommendations were largely based on my experiences during the previous six years at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site (CHPI), Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, where I had developed and implemented a multiyear archeological research project based on the contractor's comprehensive subsurface testing program (Brockington 1987).

The subsurface testing program at CHPI—a twenty-eight-acre park—proved to be an excellent basis for identifying where archeological resources were present or absent. This information has been extremely reliable for planning investigations focusing on the eighteenth-century plantation landscape, as well as for determining the level of archeology and the funds needed to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. During the planning for construction of the park's administrative and visitor facilities in 1993–1994, I was able to determine that several acres needed no Section 106 investigation. Undoubtedly, having Brockington's comprehensive subsurface data saved tens of thousands of dollars that otherwise would have been spent examining the areas slated for the construction of a visitor contact station, the entrance and service roads, the visitor parking lot, and a curation facility.

I proposed a comprehensive subsurface investigation for Magnolia Plantation in the April meeting and subsequently incorporated my proposal into

a research design entitled *Research Design for Archeological Investigations at Magnolia Plantation, Cane River Creole National Park and Heritage Area, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana* (Keel 1996). This research design was accepted, and funds were made available for the project in May 1996.

PROJECT GOALS

The following goals were identified in the research design (Keel 1996):

1. Insure that no archeologically significant resources are adversely impacted by construction and development (e.g., immediately planned stabilization projects) at the plantation prior to the development of the General Management Plan (GMP).
2. Accumulate baseline data characterizing the location, distribution, age, integrity, and significance of archeological deposits throughout the Magnolia Plantation unit.
3. Sample soil units in the immediate vicinity of the standing structures in order to determine the presence, if any, of archeological deposits in association.

As the project developed, additional advantages of the Magnolia Plantation comprehensive subsurface testing program became clear, such as the ability to accomplish the following:

- correlate some archeological deposits with historic documents;
- provide data as needed to the planning effort; and
- determine what additional archeological work is necessary and desirable to enhance park development, interpretation, archeological resource management, and resource conservation.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

During May and early June 1996, in addition to preparing the research design and cost estimate and having them reviewed and approved, much time and effort were spent planning the expedition. Archeological technicians from the Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) were selected; the crew was completed with new hires from the Natchitoches area; equipment rental, lodging, and travel arrangements were made; field gear was assembled and supplies ordered; and a myriad of other details were attended to. I discussed the project in detail with Dr. Thomas H. Eubanks, Louisiana State Archaeologist, who reviews and comments on archeological undertakings for the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer.

The expedition departed from Tallahassee on June 3, 1996, and the crew started fieldwork at Magnolia Plantation the following morning. Fieldwork was concluded on July 18, 1996, and the crew returned to Tallahassee the following day. Approximately 2,527 person-hours were expended in con-

ducting the field investigations. Slave Cabins 1 and 3 were investigated for 273 hours of this time (mostly during periods of rain when it was impossible to work in the open).

The crew excavated 1,206 one-foot-diameter auger holes. Placed twenty-five feet apart, they were dug to culturally sterile subsoil or as deep as the auger would penetrate. If the auger tests were continuously joined, they would have covered a distance of a little more than six miles. If the holes could have been stacked, they would have reached a depth of just over three-tenths of a mile. The auger tests produced 19,813 specimens. The crew excavated two formal test units at the slave hospital or overseer's house. They also excavated five-foot-wide trenches across the interior north walls of the north rooms in Slave Cabins 1 and 3. This report documents and interprets the results of these efforts except for: the work in Slave Cabins 1 and 3; the excavations conducted between November 17 and 27, 1996, at Slave Cabin 7; and the two test units at the slave hospital/overseer's house, which will be described in a separate report.



Chapter 2

Context

This chapter presents a brief summary of the natural world context of the Cane River area, an abbreviated discussion of the history of Magnolia Plantation (Figure 2), and a general overview of the archeology of the plantation and the surrounding area. Archeological investigations conducted by Coastal Environments, Inc., are briefly described, but will be more fully treated in a forthcoming report of our study of Cabins 1, 3, and 7.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE

Natchitoches Parish has a temperate climate. The average daily summer temperature is 82 degrees Fahrenheit with an average daily maximum of 94 degrees; winter temperatures average 51 degrees with an average daily minimum of 39 degrees. The highest temperature, recorded on July 24, 1954, was 108 degrees; the lowest, recorded on February 2, 1951, was 3 degrees. Relative humidity is highest around daybreak at 90 percent; by mid-afternoon it falls to an average of 60 percent, although it seems much higher while performing manual labor!

Precipitation averages 50 inches annually with half occurring between April and September. Snowfall is negligible. On the average, there are 240 frost-free days per year, making both early and late crop harvests possible (Martin et al. 1990:2–3).

GEOLOGY

The Red River Basin has been the focus of a number of geological studies (Abington 1973; Fisk 1938, 1940; Lenzer 1977; Russ 1975; Saucier 1974). These studies have emphasized, as one would expect, Pleistocene and Holocene geomorphology. In a nutshell, the lithologic basement of the Red River Basin is composed of tertiary bed-

rock scoured by fluvial processes and filled with alluvial sediments that have been reworked many times (Thornbury 1965:62). The geology of the basin, other than the source of the parent materials for the soils, has little significance for this study. The tendency of the Red River soils is to expand and shrink with changes in moisture levels, causing major collapses along the riverbanks. This process historically led to trees collapsing into the channel during and after floods, which led to the creation of the Great Raft (Mills 1978).

SOILS

The western portion of Magnolia Plantation is made up of Roxana, a very fine sandy loam. Typically, Roxana soils are reddish-yellow in color, fine textured, and extremely fertile. They are excellent for raising cotton, wheat, grain sorghum, and soybeans. These crops, characteristic to the area, were abundant in the fields between the plantation and Natchitoches in 1996. Roxana soils are found along the more level portions of the Red River and the tributaries of its floodplain.

The eastern area of the plantation is characterized by Gallion silt loam, Latanier clay, Moreland silt loam, and Moreland clay soils. The Roxana and Gallion soils are the best agricultural soils in the parish. The Latanier clay and Moreland silt loam soils, while rich, are less productive due to poor aeration caused by poor drainage. When compared to other soils in the parish (Table 1), it is clear that the lands acquired by the LeComtes, in addition to the old French land grant, were among the best in the entire parish.

The soils present at Magnolia Plantation have all formed in alluvial parent material deposited during the Pleistocene and Holocene periods. The primary factor that leads to the formation of the different soils at this locality is probably distance from the river channel. The finer particles of clay are transported farther away from the river when

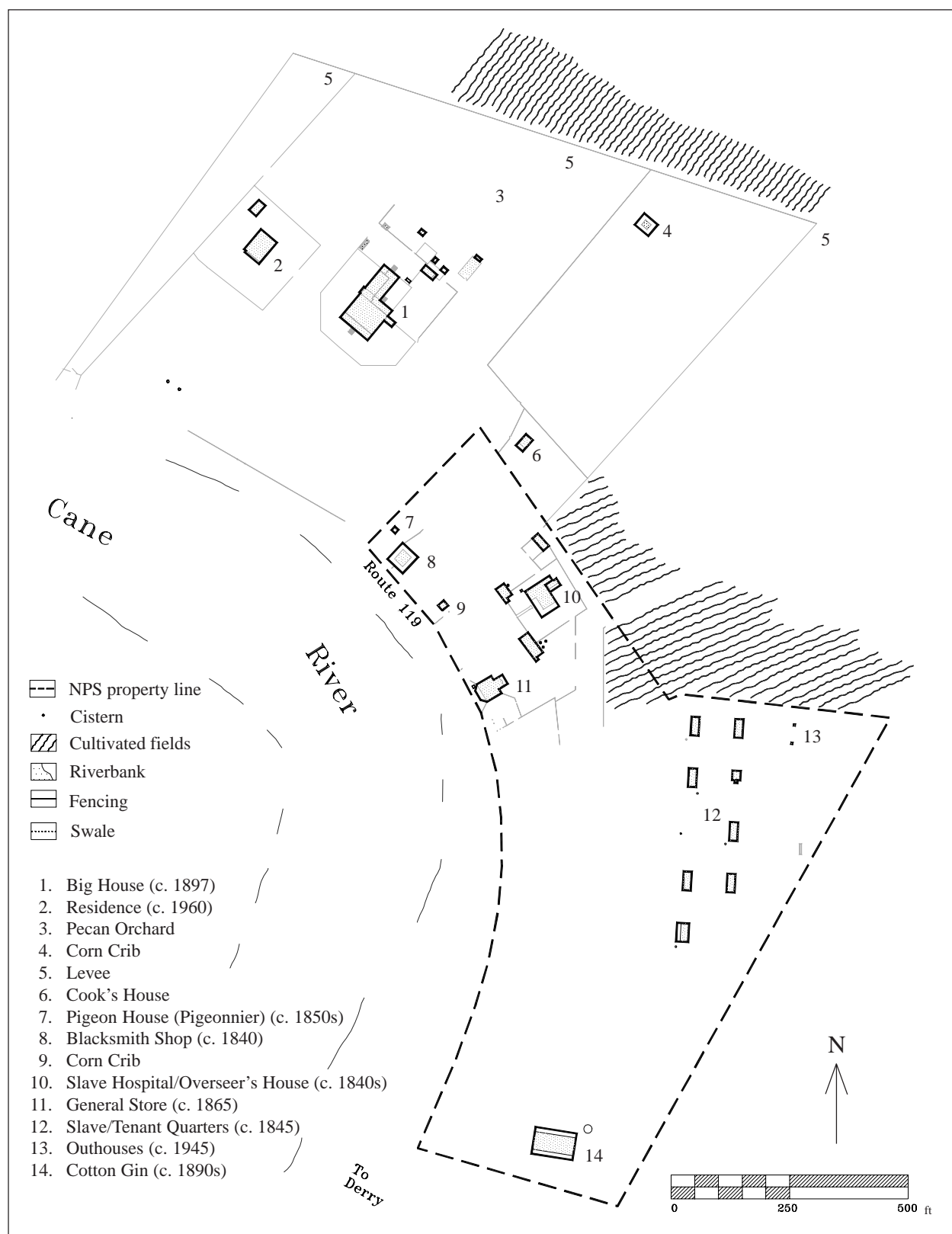


Figure 2 — National Park boundary and core area of Magnolia Plantation showing extant structures.

Table 1 — Productivity of common Natchitoches Parish soils (from Martin et al. 1990) (≠ denotes not suitable to crop or not usually grown).

SOIL	YIELD/ACRE				COTTON YIELD AVG. ACRE (%)
	<i>Cotton (lint)</i> (lbs.)	<i>Soybeans</i> (bu.)	<i>Wheat (bu.)</i>	<i>Grain Sorghum</i> (bu.)	
Roxana sandy loam	850	40	50	80	160
Gallion silt loam	825	40	50	75	156
Latanier clay	675	40	40	65	127
Moreland silt loam	625	37	30	60	118
Beauregard	575	25	45	65	108
Keithville	550	25	45	60	104
Shatta	550	25	45	60	104
Sacul	500	20	40	50	94
Acadia	400	27	≠	70	75
Briley	275	≠	45	55	52
Moreland clay	≠	33	≠	45	≠
Average	530	28	35	62	

it floods. The sands and silts are deposited fairly rapidly and near the river.

Martin and his colleagues (1990:110) described the colors of the Roxana A-horizon as hues of 10YR to 7.5YR to 5YR, with values of 3 or 4 and chroma of 4 to 6. The C-horizon has hues from 7.5YR to 5YR, with values of 4 or 5 and chroma of 4 to 8. In other words, Roxana soil is yellowish red in color.

HYDROLOGY

The Cane River, which until 1835 was a channel of the Red River (Nardini 1963), carried immense amounts of water, sand, and silts from upstream. Along the course of this section of the Cane, these sands and silts were deposited as over bank and point bar sediments. As the basin filled the over bank, sediments became quite small in texture size. Coarser sediments were deposited along the natural levees, whereas finer material was deposited in the back swamps. This phenomenon is clearly seen in the stratigraphy of the auger holes drilled at Magnolia Plantation.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Hahn and Wells (1991:8) provide a list of the prominent native flora and fauna. They emphasize the genera and species that would have been important to Native Americans in the region. However, their treatment of the dimensions of the natural world omit the change brought about by civilized settlement. Since no significant aboriginal material has been recovered from the archeological investigations at Magnolia, this section will emphasize characteristics of the biota important since the land grants of 1753.

The alluvial floodplains of the region support stands of pine, particularly loblolly (*Pinus taeda*) and slash pine (*Pinus elliotti*), in mixed oak-hickory forest. Because of their intolerance of shade, longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) is present only in patchy patterns (Shelford 1963:78). More typically, the bottomlands are characterized by patchy mixed broadleaf stands that are relics of the forest community prior to widespread land clearing for farming and the lumber industry. Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), hackberry (*Celtis*

laevigata), oak (*Quercus* spp.), pecan (*Carya illinoensis*), and sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) are common members of this community. Willow (*Salix* spp.) and bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) are present along the river margin and around the lakes and ponds that dot the landscape (Hahn and Wells 1991).

At Magnolia Plantation, especially within the boundary of the park, the land has been largely cleared of native bottomland forests. Currently, only live oak, hackberry, pecan, sycamore, magnolia, and mulberry trees are present (Goetcheus et al. 1996). These are situated around the slave hospital/overseer's house, near the slave cabins, and along the fences. A row of oak trees separates the Big House from the work area.

Crop land, plus hayfields and pasture, occupy about 20 percent of the land in the parish. Popular crops, such as cotton, corn, grain sorghum, and soybeans, although they use only about 8 percent of the land, provide between seventy and eighty million dollars annually to the local economy.

HISTORY OF MAGNOLIA PLANTATION

During the winter/spring of 1998, while inventorying Prudhomme family papers stored in the attic of the Big House at Oakland Plantation, Dr. Ann Patton Malone discovered a number of letters and other documents related to the LeComte family and Magnolia Plantation. Also, on May 29, 1998, Betty Hertzog loaned me the original 1858 plat of the plantation, which is much clearer than the photograph Malone used in her overview (1996). Information derived from these materials led us to substantially modify some of the interpretations presented in an early draft of this report. The appropriate corrections have been made in the following synopsis of Malone's study.

EARLY LECOMTE FAMILY HISTORY

The history of the land that eventually became Magnolia Plantation begins with the immigration from France of Jean Baptiste LeComte I, son of Claude LeComte and Parine Combre LeComte. Documentation indicates that Jean Baptiste I was

residing at the Natchitoches Post in Louisiana by at least 1753, when he applied for and obtained a French land grant. This grant included land on both sides of the Red [Cane] River, part of which would eventually be incorporated into Magnolia Plantation. In 1756, Jean Baptiste I married Marguerite LeRoy, who was living at the post by at least 1721. Jean Baptiste I (d. 1784) and Marguerite (d. 1811) had three children: Ambroise I (1760–1834), Marie Françoise (b. ca. 1762), and Louise Marguerite (b. 1757). The two sisters married into local families. In 1783, Ambroise I married H  l  ne Cloutier (ca. 1766–1825).

Ambroise I and H  l  ne's one son, Jean Baptist II (1786–1825), married Marianne Cephalide Lambre in 1806. Jean Baptiste II and Marianne's son Ambroise II was born in 1807. After Marianne died in 1811, Jean Baptiste II had two subsequent marriages. He died in 1825, a few months after his last marriage took place. His mother H  l  ne died a few months before him. Prior to her death, she donated her half of the LeComte landholdings to her grandson Ambroise II.

Ambroise II married Julia Buard (1809–1845) in 1827. They had six children, two sons and four daughters. The two sons, Jules and Jean Baptiste, died soon after birth. Marianne Cephalide Laura LeComte died at the age of twenty-eight. Ursula Attala (sometimes spelled Atala), Eulalie Cora, and Eliza Elizabeth LeComte all lived to be over fifty.

FOUNDING OF MAGNOLIA PLANTATION

During his lifetime, Ambroise I witnessed a major shift in the agricultural economy. Tobacco had been the primary crop until cotton production became lucrative after the invention of the Whitney cotton gin in 1793. The potential profits to be made in cotton caused many planters to increase their holdings, both in acreage and slaves. Subsequently, the profits from cotton farming, peaking at 33.9 cents per pound in 1817, exceeded those made by small-scale tobacco exportation and subsistence farming.

Taking advantage of the Panic of 1819, Ambroise I bought several tracts of land on the left bank of the Red (Cane) River from neighbors and relatives who needed cash. He continued to

purchase acreage in 1824, 1825, and 1826. In 1833, either Ambroise I or Ambroise II procured seven arpents (an arpent is equal to about 0.85 acres) on the left descending bank fronting the Cane River for \$6,100. That same year, one of them acquired the Barthelemy Plantation, comprising four arpents on the left bank of the Cane, for \$1,200. In 1834, the LeComtes bought four more arpents on the left bank and three on the right bank. In 1835, Ambroise II purchased sixty arpents on the right bank of the Cane River and nine hundred on the left bank for \$29,000. All the land acquired between 1824 and 1835 and the left bank property from the original LeComte land grant became part of Magnolia Plantation. Ambroise II purchased additional land as late as 1851 (Appendix 1, February 1, 1851 letter).

Immediately following the founding of Magnolia, planters in general were hit with hard times. Cotton prices dropped well below the cost of production and drove many planters out of business. As a result, the LeComtes halted expansion and economized. Relying on their stock operations, they rode out the panic. The woodlands of Magnolia were used to raise free-ranging sheep, cattle, and hogs. By 1849, cotton prices rose to a profitable level and remained lucrative throughout the 1850s.

When Ambroise II's wife Julia died in 1845 her estate went into probate. A detailed inventory was taken of the property belonging to her and Ambroise II (separately and in community). The value of the property to be adjudicated was \$107,215; community real property was valued at \$89,013; paraphernalia was appraised at \$5,623. Ambroise's individual property was set at \$84,026. Thus, their total estate was appraised to be worth over \$285,877.

In 1846, a year after Julia's death, Ambroise II married Lise Victorie Désirée Sompayrac. He moved his family to a town house in Natchitoches. Day-to-day operation of Magnolia and Shallow Lake Plantations was left in the hands of overseers. Suzette Hertzog Buard (Julia's sister-in-law) and her children remained at Magnolia, along with her brother Matthew Hertzog. In 1852, Atala (daughter of Ambroise II and Julia) married Matthew.

Matthew was the son of Jean François Hertzog and Marianne Désirée Prudhomme, neighbors of the LeComtes. After his daughter and son-in-law's marriage, Ambroise II gave them 40 percent ownership interest in Magnolia and retained the remaining 60 percent.

The decade following the LeComte-Hertzog partnership was the most prosperous in Magnolia history. Cotton prices remained high, and production increased with the conversion to a steam-driven cotton gin. By 1860, LeComte produced more cotton and owned more slaves (235) than anyone in the parish. The number of slaves living at Magnolia Plantation at this time is unknown because the census includes resident slaves from other LeComte properties. Inventories from 1840 to 1860 identify some, but not all, who worked in specific areas of the plantation. The slave community at Magnolia experienced a certain amount of stability. During the lean years, many planters had been forced to sell their slaves, but not LeComte. He stopped buying slaves and concentrated on holding the ones he already owned.

DAILY LIFE

Little documentary evidence to indicate abuse or neglect of the slaves has survived. Indirect information indicates that punishment included being locked in stocks or temporarily losing privileges. W. B. Eddins (Appendix 1, May 2, 1851 letter) recounts punishing a slave, Charles, but not "as much as he deserved" for burglarizing the Big House. However, Magnolia's slaves had better housing and diet than did other slaves in the area. Despite the reliance on a one-crop economy, records indicate that the slaves enjoyed a relatively balanced diet. Rations consisted of corn meal (processed at Magnolia), pork, and molasses. Beef, flour, rice, macaroni, and oysters occasionally supplemented their diet. Along with their rations, the slaves ate fish from the river and lakes on the plantation, wild game from the forests, and vegetables from their own gardens. A supply of medicine was kept on hand to treat common ailments, physicians were called to minister to the seriously ill, and sojourns to healing springs were contemplated for at least one slave.

The mortality rate among slaves (and whites, as well) was high. Droughts, floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes all had an impact on the plantation population. Yellow fever and cholera were endemic during the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. Slaves were often buried at the Shallow Lake Cemetery. However, according to descendants of Magnolia's slaves, later burials were in the "people's graveyard" east of the slave quarters.

AFTERMATH OF THE CIVIL WAR

Throughout the Civil War, the LeComte and Hertzog families supported the Confederacy financially. Several family members were killed in the conflict. To add to the devastation, the Big House at Magnolia was burned in April 1864 by Federal troops during the Red River Campaign. Only the brick foundation and portions of the exterior walls survived. Matthew and Atala subsequently moved into the slave hospital a few hundred yards south of the Big House. While exploring the remains of his home, Matthew noticed a snow-white mockingbird among the ruins. He believed the bird's appearance to be a sign and began plans for a new house.

Agricultural production at Magnolia varied between 1861 and 1914. During the Civil War, subsistence farming became a mainstay. After the war, the federal government required freed people to be employed through labor contracts. Many of Magnolia's former slaves remained on the plantation to work as freed people. Immediately after the war, they were contracted as gang laborers, later as day laborers or sharecropper tenants. The sharecroppers, who worked on designated farms of forty acres on Magnolia land, utilized mule power. Mechanized equipment was used by the day laborers. The sharecroppers and day laborers were furnished with homes and gardens. They were "required to own a cow and a mule and to raise a crop of vegetables to supply their own tables." Former slaves from other plantations found work at Magnolia as well. Population census records and ledgers indicate that several generations of families worked at Magnolia; some were eventually able to move out of tenancy and purchase their own land elsewhere. Between 1914 and 1945,

twenty-five to fifty families lived and worked on Magnolia and other Hertzog properties. Some lived in the eight extant cabins and the cook's house. Other tenant families occupied farms located along the river road fronting Magnolia. Cooks, yardmen, and overseer's lived on the plantation as well.

An 1870 enumeration listed the farm property of Ambroise II and Matthew separately. Atala and Matthew reported 1,400 acres of unimproved land, 100 acres of improved land, and a \$12,000 cash value for their share of the farm. This value may also represent Matthew's personal plantation, which was located next to Magnolia (referred to as Magnolia Point). The farm machinery was evaluated at \$200, and one-third of the crop was used to pay wages to tenant farmers. Ambroise's enumeration for the same year was substantially higher than Matthew's. He reported 6,065 acres in woodland, 1,320 other unimproved acres, and 1,650 acres clear. His farmland was worth \$64,000, and machinery and implements were worth \$500. His enumeration, however, included all his Cane River property and not just Magnolia. As an indication of the economic decline of the South, the 1870 value of the LeComte-Hertzog holding was \$76,700; a decade earlier this property was worth \$251,000.

Ambroise LeComte II died in 1883. A complete inventory of his estate was taken and assessed at over \$134,000—an indication that some economic recovery had been made in the intervening thirteen years. Atala and Matthew inherited Magnolia, although portions of the estate were auctioned in 1887.

Included in the inventory was a listing of store merchandise. Following the Civil War, Matthew and Atala had developed the Magnolia store into a prosperous business. The store stocked medicine, food, clothing, and plantation supplies. Store accounts were valued at \$12,912. As recent as the 1950s, the store served not only as a plantation commissary but as a general merchandise store and social center for the community of Rivière aux Cannes. The porch and store proper provided meeting places for workers and their families to exchange gossip and news. Workers often played dice or cards on the porch. The Hertzogs sometimes

provided organized entertainment for the entire community. Horseracing and baseball games were favorite sports, with residents either participating or observing. People from diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds took part in the entertainment. Quilting bees, fishing, hunting, swimming, and gambling were other pastimes.

THE HERTZOGS AND MAGNOLIA

The Hertzogs moved into the rebuilt Magnolia Big House less than a year before Atala's death (October 31, 1897) from "an affliction of the lungs." Matthew died on May 25, 1903, leaving two heirs: Ambrose J. Hertzog and Frances "Fanny" Hertzog Chopin. The plantation and other property was divided between them. No inventory exists since the estate was not entered into probate. Fanny inherited the area occupied by the gin and quarters, which she sold to her brother to keep the work area complete.

Ambrose J. Hertzog (1857–1921) married Sarah (Sally) Hunter (1873–1960) on April 26, 1892. They had five surviving children. One of their sons, Matthew Hertzog II, after serving in the armed forces during World War I, returned to help his parents run Magnolia.

Between 1914 and the end of World War II, few land acquisitions and sales occurred. However, the physical landscape was altered and land use changed. The stables and carriage house were destroyed during the World War I era. In 1939, a tornado severely damaged the Cottage Buard, the eight remaining cabins, and the gin barn. The cottage was damaged beyond repair, but the gin and cabins were salvaged. Additional fences and outbuildings were constructed, moved, or taken down according to need during this period.

According to the 1921 succession of Ambrose J. Hertzog, the farm implements used on the plantation were changing. Twelve newer and stronger steel-beamed plows were used alongside old wood-beamed plows. Additional equipment included three middle busters, two blunt plows, six cotton planters, three corn and cotton planters, sixteen *Planter Jr.* brand cultivators, mowing machines, two *B.W.* brand cultivators, ditching machines, a hay press, harrows, and stalk cutters. Ginning

equipment was not mentioned in the inventory. Other evidence indicates that gin stands had been replaced about 1900 (NPS 1997:16).

A detailed list of the Magnolia Plantation store's merchandise is also included. The store's 1921 inventory was much the same as that taken in 1883. The only significant change was the addition of a typewriter and an adding machine.

Photographs located in the Cammie Henry Collection, Eugene P. Watson Library at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, and others provided by the family, show the condition of the cabins at Magnolia by 1922 and later. One brick cabin had a raised plank porch braced by sturdy log posts. A bench was situated on the porch and two rain barrels were located at its edge. The roof was covered by wooden shingles, and a fence separated the porch from that of the neighboring cabin. Yard vegetation was sparse, which probably indicates a swept yard. By the mid-twentieth century, frame and sheathed rooms with shed roofs had been added to the cabins (Figure 3).

The Great Depression of 1929 presented another era of difficulty for Magnolia. Despite the hardships, the family kept tenants and workers employed. Good management coupled with the federal government's New Deal programs helped Magnolia Plantation pull through the Depression.

World War II ushered in high agricultural prices, which stimulated full production. The war also caused changes that would have lasting effects on Magnolia. Men were drafted and others left the farm for war factory jobs. Farmers coped with the drain on labor by increasing mechanization and using new fertilizers and herbicides for weed control. In spite of high prices, farmers reduced their cotton crops in favor of other equally lucrative crops, such as soybeans and peanuts. Beef production was increased.

Between 1945 and 1960, the gradual economic demise of Magnolia Plantation changed the very landscape. Barns disappeared, tenant houses were torn down, shares were absorbed into large fields, and tractor sheds replaced mule lots. Although most of the sharecropping families had departed by 1950, those involved in day labor continued to live at Magnolia into the 1970s.



Figure 3 — A 1960s' photograph of a slave cabin subsequently occupied by tenants at Magnolia Plantation.

An inventory taken after Sally Hertzog's death in 1960 attests to Magnolia's transformation. Modern farm equipment is evidence of the mechanization taking place on the plantation. By this time, only four mules remained; they, like the plowhands, had been replaced by the tractor. Besides numerous tractors, the inventory lists mowers, row cultivators, planters, loaders, rakes, and disk harrows.

A portion of the land constituting Magnolia Plantation has remained under the ownership and management of one family since 1753. It has survived the American Civil War, the Great Depression, and two world wars. Despite everything, Magnolia endured because of the dedication and ability of its owners and managers, who preserved the customs and practices that worked and adjusted to the challenges presented by changing circumstances and technology.

ARCHEOLOGY

The regional prehistory will not be recounted here as it has no bearing on the subject of this report. Readers interested in this topic are referred to Neuman's 1984 synopsis of Louisiana archeology. However, historic archeology in Natchitoches Parish will be summarized to the extent that it contributes to the set of research issues concerning Magnolia Plantation.

Los Adaes (e.g., Gregory 1980, 1982a, 1985; Gregory and McCorkle 1981), the Fort St. Jean Baptiste replication site (Gregory 1979), and the Badin-Roque House (Gregory 1982b) are the only major historic archeology projects that have been completed in the parish. However, other archeological projects have been undertaken in the general vicinity. Some were major in scope, such as the multiyear archeological investigations at Fort

Polk (e.g., Anderson et al. 1988; Franks 1990; Largent 1993); others were minor and related to compliance requirements (e.g., Campbell et al. 1978; Guevin 1990; Mead 1989; Twiner 1986).

The preceding sections on the natural environment and the history of the place give a sense of the milieu in which the archeological investigations took place. Prior to the NPS study in the summer of 1996, limited work had been conducted at the site. Dr. Pete Gregory, NSU, dug a few shovel tests at the site in 1980. The limited scope of this work precluded gathering much information about the nature of the archeological deposits of the plantation. Gregory did, however, determine that the area south and west of the cabins had been plowed extensively and that midden deposits likely existed in the cabin yards (Gregory, personal communication 1996).

In March 1991, Thurston Hahn and Tom Wells (Coastal Environments, Baton Rouge) conducted shovel tests in seven cabin yards. One formal one-meter-square test within and two formal one-meter-square tests outside four of the cabins were also excavated. The shovel tests were placed parallel to and a meter away from the exterior walls of the cabins; interior formal tests were located near the fireplaces. Exterior formal tests were placed along the east and west walls immediately north of the doorways. Hahn and Wells concluded that various renovations and repairs, particularly those following the 1939 tornado, had extensively disturbed or destroyed the archeological record. They recognized that undisturbed deposits may be located further away from the cabins and, if present, may answer many questions (Hahn and Wells 1991:70–71). Our

forthcoming report will discuss their work in more detail and describe the 1996 SEAC investigations in the cabins.

HISTORIC PLATS VERSUS ARCHEOLOGICAL REALITY

As noted earlier, I was fortunate to obtain a photograph of a surveyed plat (Figure 4) of the plantation from Betty Hertzog (through Ann Patton Malone). Local surveyor, G. S. Walmsley, made it for Ambroise LeComte II in February 1858. In late May 1998, Betty Hertzog loaned me the original plat. A portion of the plat was electronically scanned (see cover). Both the plat and scanned image were much more legible than the photograph of the plat.

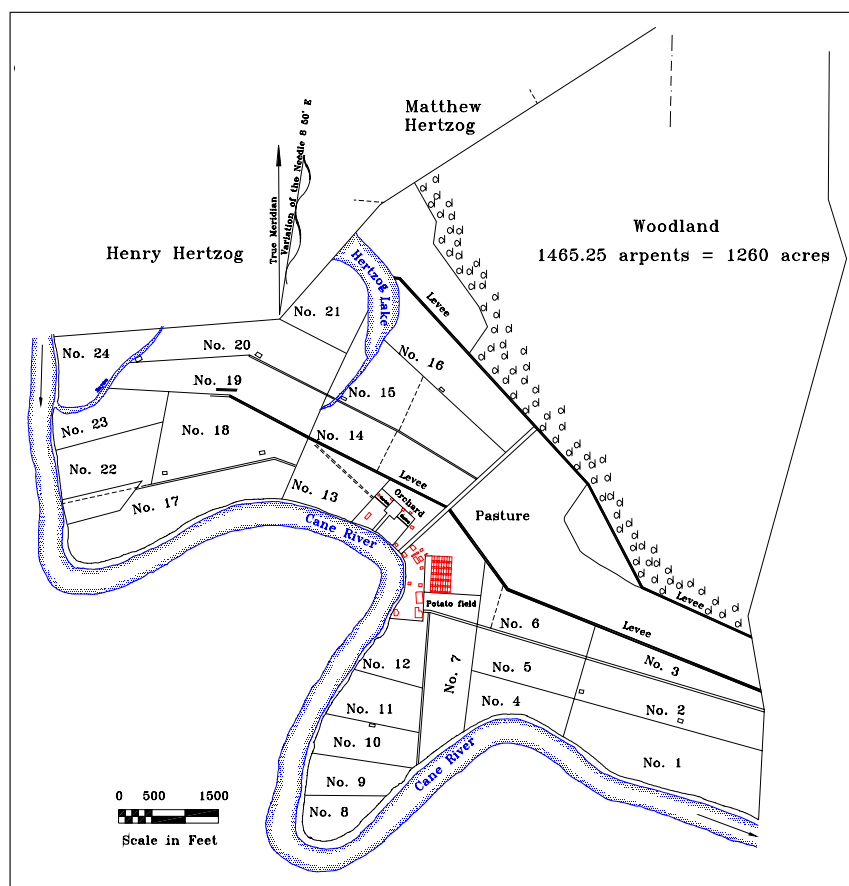


Figure 4 — G. S. Walmsley's 1858 plat of Magnolia Plantation (source: Betty Hertzog).

The plat depicts many, if not all, of the major structures on the plantation at that time (Figure 5). Minor structures and features, such as chicken houses, kitchen gardens, mule pens, and horse corrals—which one would expect on a plantation of this size—are not depicted. Most of the following summaries of the structures and features depicted on the 1858 plat are drawn from Malone’s overview (1996:46–54).

1. *Cotton “Baled”*

Malone interpreted this structure, situated due west of the Gin House, as the Cottage Buard. Although a reasonable interpretation to make from the blurred photographic image, it is incorrect. It is unknown at this time whether this structure represented the old cotton press, presently housed in the gin barn, or a cotton bale storage area .

2. *Gin House*

The land on which the gin house now stands was purchased from Gasparite LaCour in 1835. Documents commenting on this acquisition mention a gin house, dwellings, and out-buildings. The cotton gin accommodated a raised gin stand, holding areas, and a save room for the lint. In 1845, the house and stand were valued at \$2,800. Since a gin was referred to in the 1835 deed, its 1845 appraisal suggests that LeComte may have enlarged and outfitted the gin house with expensive machinery; this may have included the mule-operated, screw-type cotton press, which is still in place. Today it is but one of a half-dozen similar, still-complete presses in the United States, and the only press found in its original location. Like other area plantations, Magnolia had switched to steam-powered gins and presses by 1850. The tornado that destroyed the cottage also demolished the building containing the boiler and steam engine (Malone 1996, fig. 12). The date of construction of the existing gin house is uncertain. A newspaper clipping from a 1941 edition of the Natchitoches Times suggests that it was constructed between 1890 and 1900.

3. *Stable*

During the 1850s, a large brick stable existed directly north of the gin house. After 1855, another brick stable was constructed in the same area, but fire destroyed both buildings around 1900.

4. *Potato Field*

The area northeast of the gin house and south of the slave quarters was designated as the “potato field.” The location of the field indicates that part of it may also have been used as personal garden plots for the slaves.

5. *Corn Cribs*

Between the river and the slave quarters, north of the gin house and stables, were two buildings. These structures no longer exist.

6. *Slave Quarters*

Seventy slave cabins, housing an estimated 3.4 people per dwelling, appear on the 1859 slave census for Ambroise LeComte. Close to one-third of the structures were brick, double-pen, galleried saddlebag construction. The cabins boasted a central chimney and gable parapets (Figure 6). The number of original brick cabins varies according to the source—some say 24, others 27 or 28. (There exists a tracing of a fragment of the plat showing the village as a rectangle containing four columns of six rows. The resulting twenty-four rectangles likely represent twenty-four cabins. While this tracing has no date, it may be a correction drawn by Walmsley to depict the actual configuration of the slave village.) Only eight cabins still stand today. At the time of Julia Buard’s death in 1845, the brick cabins were under construction. Their proximity to one another created a small orderly community that afforded some privacy from the plantation owners. Here kinship networks and recreation and religious activities were fostered. The driver and his family usually lived in the best room or cabin, often at the head of the first row. Apparently most of the cabins were vacant by the mid-1890s due to changing settlement pat-

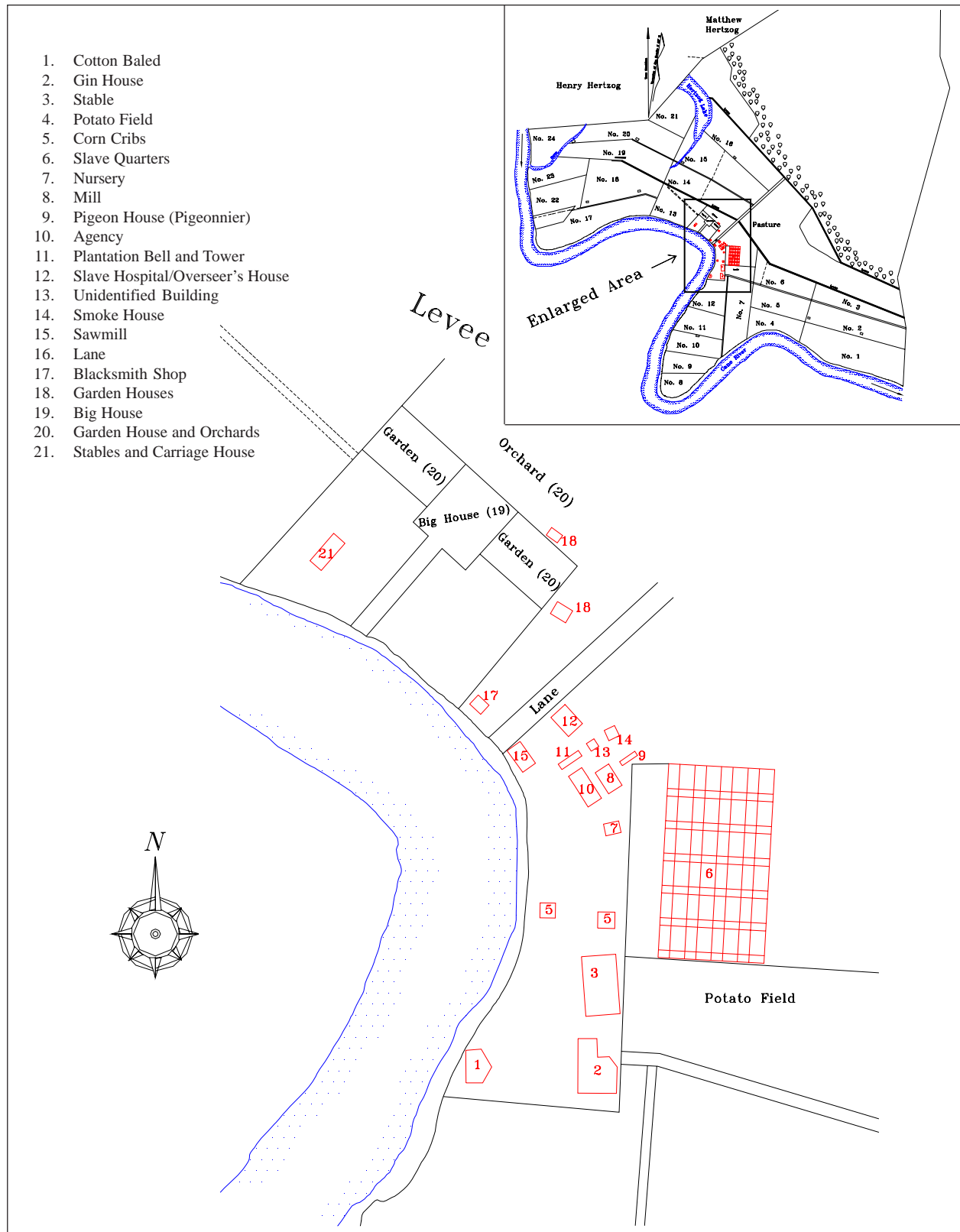


Figure 5 — Core area of Magnolia Plantation from Walmsley's 1858 plat.

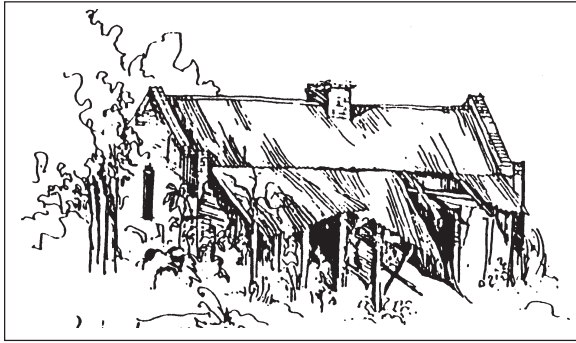


Figure 6 — Slave cabin (NPS, *Historic American Buildings Survey No. LA-1193-B*, Dec. 15, 1986).

terns brought about by emancipation. An unknown number of cabins were torn down in order to use the brick in the reconstruction of the Big House. In February 1997, the ruins of another row of four cabins were clearly visible immediately north of the existing fence in the recently plowed cotton field. Additionally, scattered construction rubble and artifacts were observed just east of the slave village in the adjacent cotton field. Clearly, the village extends beyond the park's boundary.

7. *Nursery*

A nursery indicated on the Walmsley plat no longer exists. The child-care facility was usually an ordinary cabin and fenced yard, where elderly female slaves looked after the children.

8. *Mill*

The mill no longer exists but appears on the Walmsley plat. The exact function is unknown. Family members suggest that it may have been a syrup mill. The 1845 inventory refers to an old grist mill, and a daybook from the 1850s mentions the grinding of corn meal; so perhaps it was a grist mill.

9. *Pigeon House (Pigeonnier)*

The pigeon house or pigeonier, appearing on the Walmsley plat, is either no longer standing or has been moved to the location of the present-day pigeon house (Figure 7). Pigeon houses were commonly hexagonal in shape and occasionally had brick bases.

10. *Agency*

No longer standing, the agency's function is unclear. It was situated in the midst of the plantation work area. The 1845 inventory lists large supplies of plantation commodities that would have posed a storage problem. The agency may have solved this problem and also functioned as a dispersal point for food rations, clothing, medicine, and other commodities.

11. *Plantation Bell and Tower*

The plantation bell called workers to the fields and signaled plantation residents in emergencies. The tower and bell existed until the 1950s, at which point the tower had deteriorated beyond repair. The bell, however, is still in the family's possession.

12. *Slave Hospital/Overseer's House*

This building, probably erected between 1835 and 1845, is still standing. The family refers to it as the overseer's house. The Walmsley plat, nevertheless, identifies it as the (slave) hospital, a common feature on plantations with sizable slave populations (Vlach 1993:142). Regular purchases of medicines plus abundant and healthy rations are recorded in Magnolia's 1850 daybook. After the Big House was burned in 1864, during the Red River Cam-

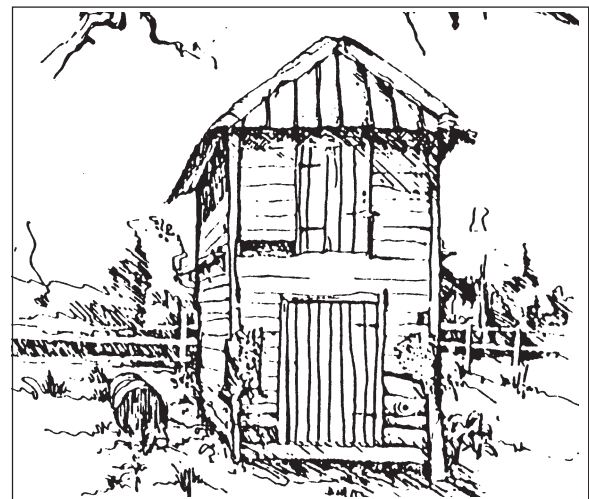


Figure 7 — Pigeon house (NPS, *Historic American Buildings Survey No. LA-1193-E*, Dec. 15, 1986).

paign, the structure served as a home for Matthew and Atala Hertzog. They remained in residence until at least 1896 when the Big House was nearly complete. The structure served as the overseer's house during the twentieth century.

13. Unidentified Building

An unidentified building—possibly a wash house or laundry—appears on the plat but is no longer standing. A covered building would have been needed for the one slave who worked full-time as a washerwoman in 1852.

14. Smoke House

The plat shows a smoke house in the clover lot behind the unidentified building.

15. Sawmill

Since sawed lumber was used for most of the 1835 to 1845 construction, it is likely that the mill was set up shortly after the land acquisition of 1835. Once located southeast of the blacksmith shop, along the side of the road, the sawmill no longer exists.

16. Lane

A lane intersecting the plantation appears on the plat. This road led to the levees, fields, and river road. It also separated the Big House and yard from the work area and the slave quarters. Remains of this lane can still be seen.

17. Blacksmith Shop

The location of the blacksmith shop today is the same as it was on the Walmsley plat. The building (Figure 8) was constructed of hand-hewn timbers, which indicate that it may antedate the LeComte purchase of the land. The building served as the blacksmith shop from the 1840s on, with occasional repairs and modifications made to it.

18. Garden Houses

Two buildings designated the garden houses appear on the Walmsley plat but are no longer extant. Their specific functions are not known.

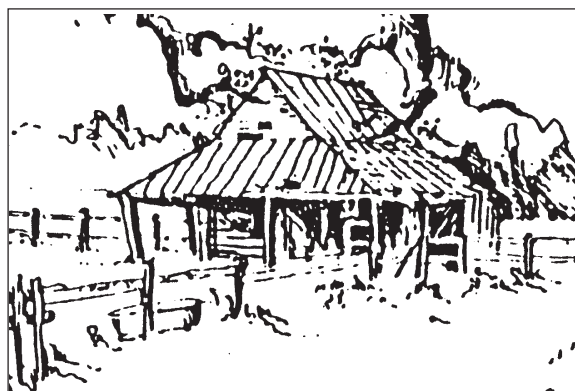


Figure 8 — Blacksmith shop (NPS, *Historic American Buildings Survey* No. LA-1193-D, Dec. 15, 1986).

The following structures and features lie outside the park's northern boundary and remain in Hertzog family ownership.

19. Big House

The LeComte's original 1830s' two-story raised cottage was burned in 1864 by retreating Federal troops. The extant residence was constructed by 1896, but not completely finished until 1898. Its dimensions are similar to those of the original house. The 1896 construction utilizes the original house foundation and portions of the original walls. Front and rear galleries adorn the house, along with a rear wing and private chapel. A blend of Italianate and Greek Revival architecture is clearly evident in the building's architectural style.

20. Garden House and Orchards

The Walmsley map illustrates the presence of another garden house and a ten-acre orchard behind the Big House. Two garden plots (whether vegetable or flower is unknown) were situated on either side of the yard. The garden house has not endured.

21. Stables and Carriage House

The stables, torn down in 1917, were built of white-washed cypress, bousillage, and brick. Located within the building were horse stalls, the carriage house, and the living quarters for the carriage driver and his family.

Although the site of Cottage Buard is not shown on the plat, its location has probably been archeologically determined. The cottage, according to Malone (1996:46–47), was a smaller rendition of the creole-style cottages still seen along Cane River today. It was built of white-washed cypress, brick, and bousillage. Galleries were located in both front and back. It is referred to as Cottage Buard apparently because it was occupied by Julia Buard's family in the mid-1850s. Later, remembered as The Cottage, it was invariably occupied by different relatives until it was demolished by the 1939 tornado (Malone 1996, fig. 11). Due to its proximity to the gin, slave quarters, and stables, the cottage could have been used as an overseer's house.

By 1996, as one would expect, time, accidents, natural catastrophes, and changing plantation needs resulted in the removal of many of the structures shown on the 1858 plat. Also, several structures were built after 1858 to support the changing emphases of Cane River agriculture. These included: the circa-1870 store; a cottage and sheds near the slave hospital/overseer's house; and, in the proximity of the store, stables and sheds supporting beef production. Additionally, the existing pigeonier may have been moved to its present location north of the blacksmith shop. The plat depicts a pigeon house situated between the slave

hospital and the slave village. Matthew J. Hertzog moved a log corn crib from elsewhere on the plantation to a spot between the store and the smithy.

As noted, some of these structures survive today, others do not. Consequently, we are challenged with distinguishing architectural sites shown on the plat from those constructed and razed between circa 1853 and 1996. It is possible that the archeological record also contains remains from the eighteenth-century LaCour occupation.

Adding to this challenge is the lack of accuracy in the plat. One might think that with a detailed map in hand, an investigator could measure the location of a building and then easily find its remains on the ground. Unfortunately, this is not the case. It appears that while the boundary lines were drawn accurately on the 1858 plat, internal features were plotted with less precision. Our 1996 survey demonstrated that the building dimensions and the distances between structures were inaccurately measured. Additionally, the slave quarters are depicted schematically, not as individual structures but as rectangles of various dimensions arranged in rank and file. The gin house dimensions are depicted as approximately 154 by 110 feet, but, in reality, the structure measures about 56 by 86 feet. The actual size of the other buildings are similarly overestimated. Reconciliation of these inconsistencies is considered in Chapter 5.



Chapter 3

Fieldwork

METHODOLOGY

Magnolia Plantation is recorded as 16NA295 in the Louisiana State Master Site Files. On June 4, 1996, we began our fieldwork here by selecting the location of a base line that would govern the placement and pattern of the auger tests and serve as the control line for all future investigations. In my career, I have faced innumerable situations where preceding investigators have not set permanent data points. I vowed long ago to place such points whenever I initiate archeological investigations. This method keeps everything straight and helps investigators avoid countless field hours trying to determine precisely where others have dug. In the laboratory, it enables reconciliation of the relationships depicted on site maps and plans, thereby reducing guesswork and indecision. The accuracy of our permanent grid system provides individuals from other disciplines with a tool to communicate easily and precisely about the location and features of a site. For example, landscape architects have used our Magnolia grid to inventory and map the flora, and architects and engineers have used it to map the structures. In the winter of 1996, a topographic map tied to the grid was created to illustrate both horizontal and vertical relationships across the park.

Before setting the base line, the plat prepared for transferring the land from Museum Contents Inc. to the National Park Service was carefully examined, and a visual inspection of the park was made. Both clearly showed that the configuration of the land and the locations of the structures impeded the desired single base line. Consequently, a steel axle found driven into the ground at the southeast corner of the park served as a survey monument and as our starting point designated N2000 E2000. From this point, we ran a line 1,000 feet north (N3000 E2000), then another line 225 feet west (N3000 E1775). Returning to the north,

we established N3225 E1775 and turned west again to N3225 E1700. Turning north, we placed the final datum at N3600 E1700 (Figure 9).

The survey was done with a Sokia Total Station transit. The points were marked with one-half-diameter steel rods. (A licensed land surveyor subsequently replaced these with aluminum-capped rods.) Admittedly, our survey had errors. The ending point was 0.5 feet too far west, which created an east/west error of 0.016 percent; it was also 0.8 feet too far north, for a north/south error of 0.005 percent. For auger testing, these errors are insignificant. Each auger hole penetrated the designated grid point, although not always on dead center. Additional temporary control points at 250-foot (sometimes less) intervals were established perpendicular to the north/south lines to facilitate accurately placing pin flags over the entire park. This approach is acceptable when considering the cost and time required to establish transit points.

On June 4, we pin flagged the base line between N2000 E2000 and N3000 E2000. We sank the first auger test at N2025 E2000. Six auger tests were completed on this date. We continued auger testing up the E2000 line to N3000. As this work proceeded, a survey crew—using surveyors' tapes and chains and the auxiliary control points mentioned earlier—began to pin flag large blocks of the area. The first of these blocks was bound by grid points N2500 E1725, N2750 E1775, N2500 E2000, and N2750 E2000. Excavation of the auger tests proceeded in an east/west direction from the N2750 line southward. Subsequently, two additional blocks were laid out to the south boundary of the park—west of the cotton gin house—and tested. Next, we laid out blocks from the southern boundary and east of the cotton gin barn to the boundary line north of the slave cabins. As this work was completed, we shifted west of the E2000 line, returning to the N2750 line, delimiting and augering blocks until we reached the north bound-

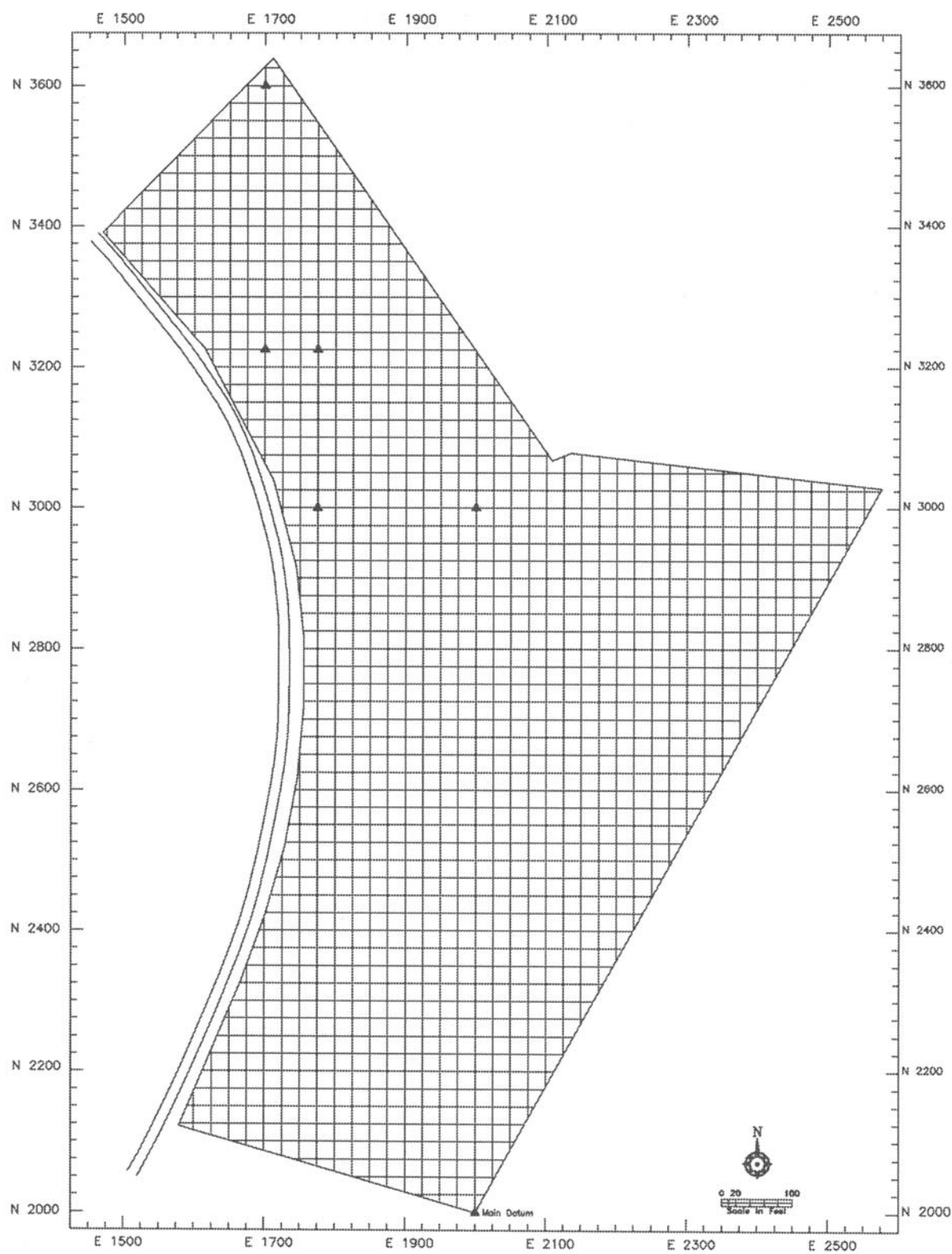


Figure 9 — Magnolia Plantation map showing the datum points and grid layout for auger testing (source: SEAC archeological survey map, Magnolia Plantation, 1996).

ary of the park. The final auger holes were drilled on lines east and south of the slave hospital/overseer's house. The last of the 1,206 auger holes was completed just before lunch on July 10, 1996.

Once the auger test locations were determined, they were marked with pin flags inscribed with the grid coordinates (corners). The tractor-mounted auger (Figure 10) was placed over the pin-flagged point, and a one-foot-diameter hole was drilled to (1) the point of contact with in situ structural remains (brick piers or foundations), (2) the subsoil, or (3) the maximum depth to which the auger would reach (about four feet below the surface). One person positioned the auger over the intersection of the grid lines; a second person ran the auger. The material thrown out by the auger was sifted through quarter-inch hard-wire screen (Figure 11). A two-person crew collected and bagged the cultural material and other interesting items found in the screen. They recorded profiles of the auger test on a form designed to record soil texture, color, depth, thickness, and descriptive information of discrete layers or strata (Figure 12). Piers, foundations, brick and mortar rubble, and other significant characteristics were drawn to scale in plan view. Appropriate features were photographed prior to backfilling the auger hole.

RESULTS

We excavated and documented 1,206 auger holes between June 4 and July 10, 1996 (Figure 13). Cultural or scientific material was recovered from 1,170 (97 percent) of these tests. Fifty-two tests (4.3 percent) revealed data and produced material in sufficient amounts or in a context that warranted their designation as features. The rest of this report describes and interprets the data set obtained from the subsurface testing program.

PRODUCTIVITY

Field journals and employee time sheets detailing daily accomplishments, field specimen logs, and notes have been used to generate the following data. A total of 2,254 person-hours were devoted to all tasks associated with the subsurface testing

program (not including the hours spent in the slave cabin investigations). These tasks included: doing a baseline transit survey; setting pin flags; clearing vegetation; augering, sifting, recovering, and rough-sorting material; backfilling holes and recording the data on forms, in notes, and by photography; completing the field specimen and photography records; and performing routine logistical chores. The number of auger holes completed on days devoted primarily to this activity ranged from 26 to 65, with an average of 47.6 holes per day. The daily totals varied widely for three reasons: rain interruptions; inconsistency in the number of features encountered daily; and reduced participation on days when one of the auger teams was pin flagging the next block to be investigated. On average, it required 1.9 person-hours per auger test for the fieldwork portion of the project.

STRATIGRAPHY

The sediments encountered across the plantation are composed of fine-textured sand and silt deposited by periodic flooding of the Red River Basin during the Pleistocene and Holocene periods of geologic time. We encountered no clear evidence of old developed land surfaces subsequently covered by more recent alluvium, although this does occur (Gregory, personal communication 1996; Martin et al. 1990:110). Consequently, the sedimentary column characteristics are the result of pedogenic (soil forming) and cultural processes. The pedogenic process combines the effects of climate, biological activity, slope, and time on the parent material to produce the specific characteristics of a soil (Jenny 1941). Cultural activity has produced the most clearly identifiable impacts on the physical characteristics of the sediments. These activities are expressed as plowed soil from agricultural industry, brick piers or footings of structures, and cisterns and mud holes filled with soil containing construction rubble and midden deposits. Except for the plow zone and some midden deposits, these situations were recorded as features. Stratigraphic profiles typical of the sediments and features are illustrated in Figure 14.

In previously farmed areas of the park, the stratigraphy was composed of a plow zone rang-



Figure 10 (above) — Augering a test hole.



Figure 11 (right) — Sifting dirt from auger test holes.

Figure 12 (below) — Recording auger test hole data.



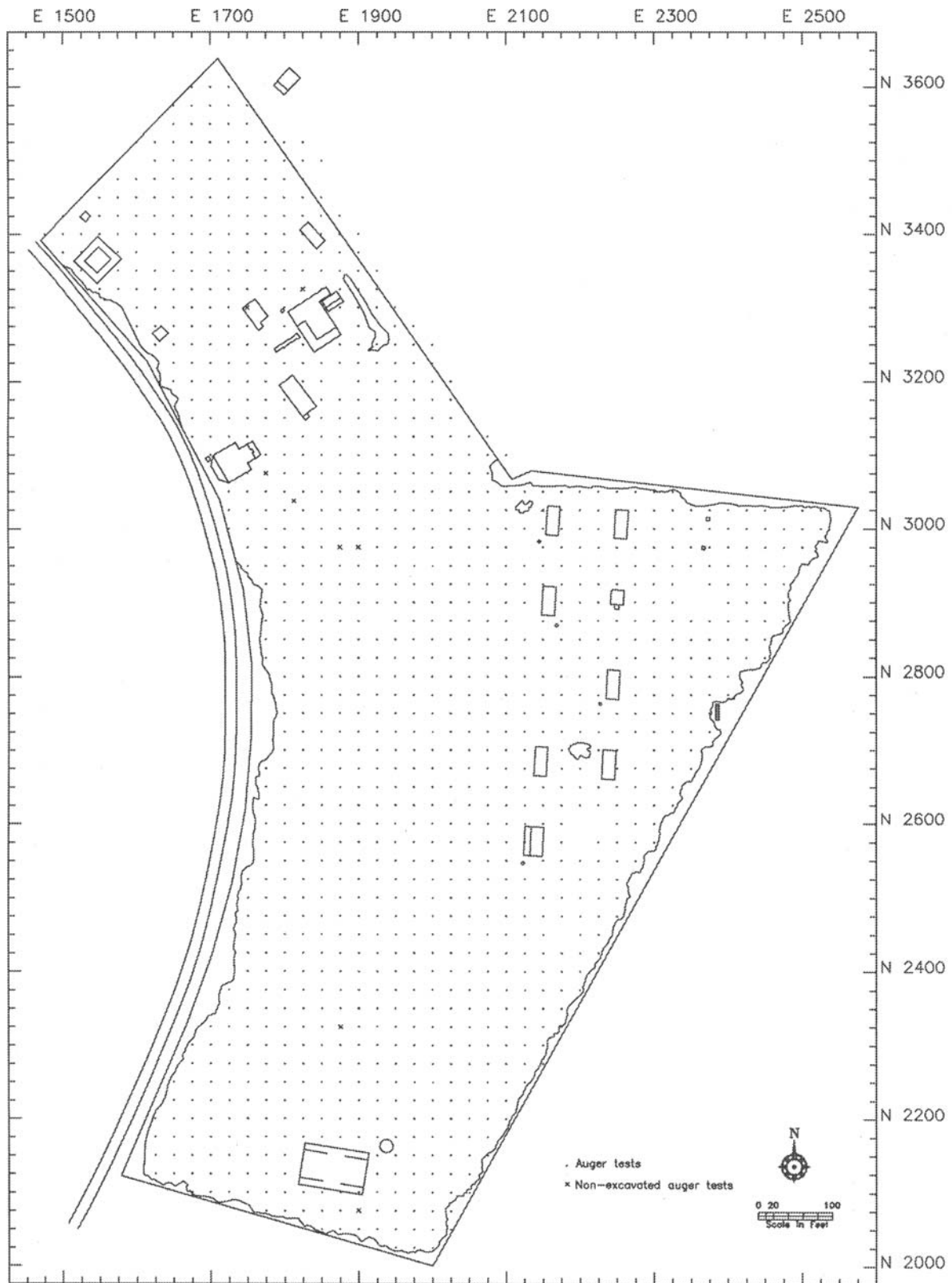


Figure 13 — Auger test holes.

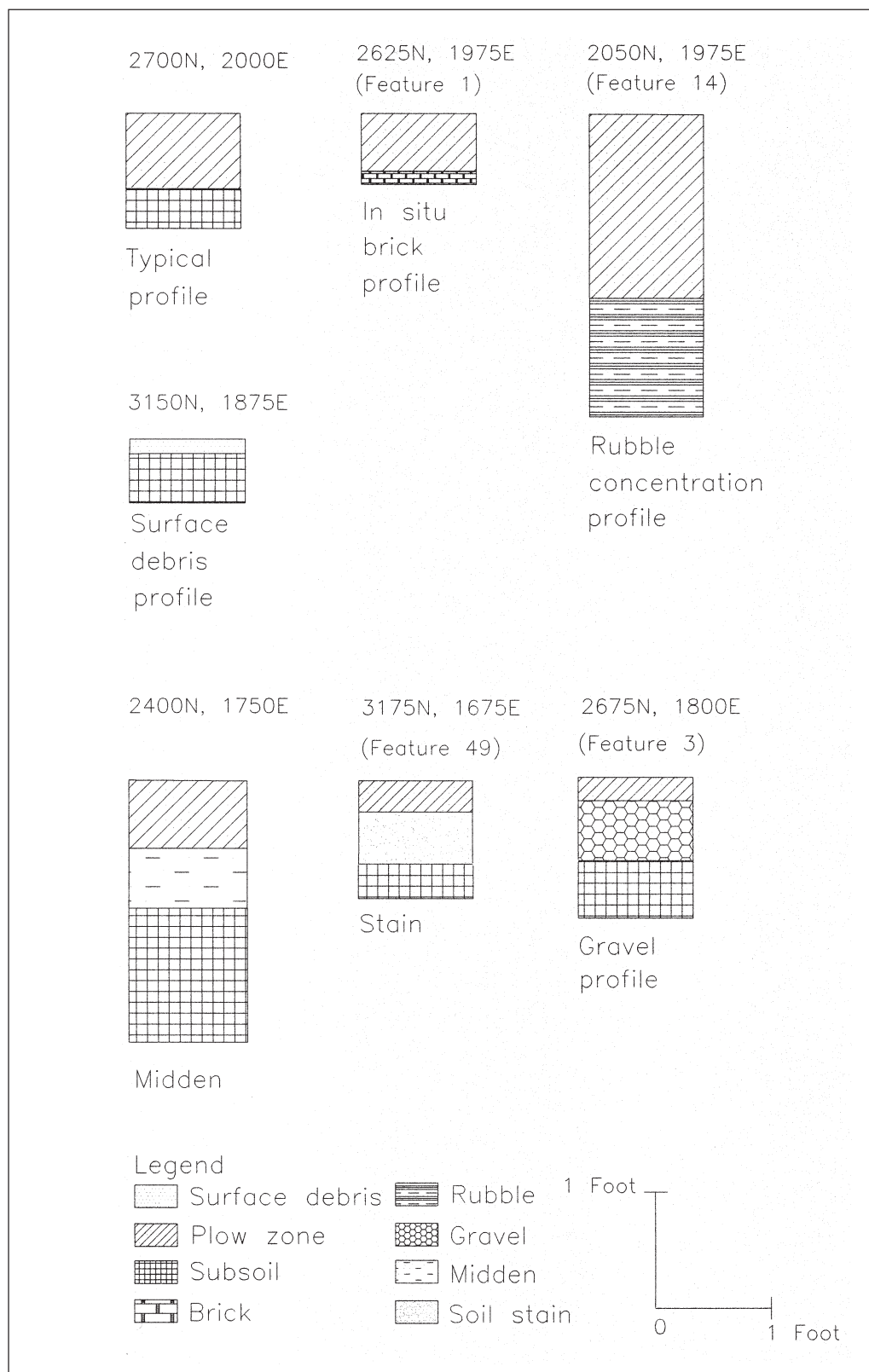


Figure 14 — Stratigraphic profiles of selected auger holes.

ing in depth from 0.5 to 1.1 feet and in color from dark brown (7.5YR3/3) to reddish brown (5YR4/3). This layer rested on culturally sterile subsoil of the same parent material, which contained less humic material and ranged in color from reddish brown (5YR4/3) to yellowish red (5YR3/6). Frequently, color changes were observed in auger hole profiles and recorded as Zone 1 or Zone 2. In unplowed areas, the uppermost unit was recorded as Zone 1. These instances represent the unmodified A-soil horizon. In eroded areas around the store, where no organic enrichment was noted, the upper unit was also recorded as Zone 1. Traffic, rain, and wind have clearly kept these areas bare. Three distinct areas of the park exhibited accumulations of midden (an organically enriched stratum created by intensive human occupation or use, containing a fairly high frequency of artifacts). These deposits are discussed next, under *Features*.

FEATURES

Fifty-eight features were recorded during the 1996 investigations. Six features (18, 29, 30, 56, 57, and 58), assigned to deposits within Slave Cabins 1 and 3, will not be reported here. The other fifty-two features were grouped into five categories: In Situ Structures, Construction Rubble, Midden, Soil Stains, and Gravel (Table 2).

IN SITU STRUCTURES

Remnants of structures (articulated brick, either dry lain or bonded with mortar) were found and recorded in eleven auger holes (see Figure 17). These features are evidence that some type of buildings once stood at these points on the landscape (Figure 15). Individually they represent the remains of piers, like those supporting the slave



Figure 15 — In situ Feature 1.

hospital/overseer's house and the store, or foundations, like those of the slave cabins. Some are situated in space relative to structures depicted on the historic plat. Feature 7 is in the vicinity of the stable to the north of the cotton gin barn. This structure was likely a substantial building sitting on piers. Features 22 and 23 are the remains of a slave cabin located directly east of Cabin 8. Feature 34 is situated relative to the other extant structures near where the "nursery" stood during the mid-nineteenth century. Feature 48 may mark the sawmill site. The assignment of these features to buildings shown on the plat is hypothetical, except for

Table 2 — Feature numbers by category (total = 52).

In Situ Structures	1, 4, 7, 8, 22, 23, 34, 36, 37, 38, 48
Construction Rubble ...	5, 6, 11, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 35, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54
Midden	9, 10, 12, 14, 26, 40, 41, 51, 55
Soil Stains	2, 15, 17, 19, 27, 28, 39, 42
Gravel	3

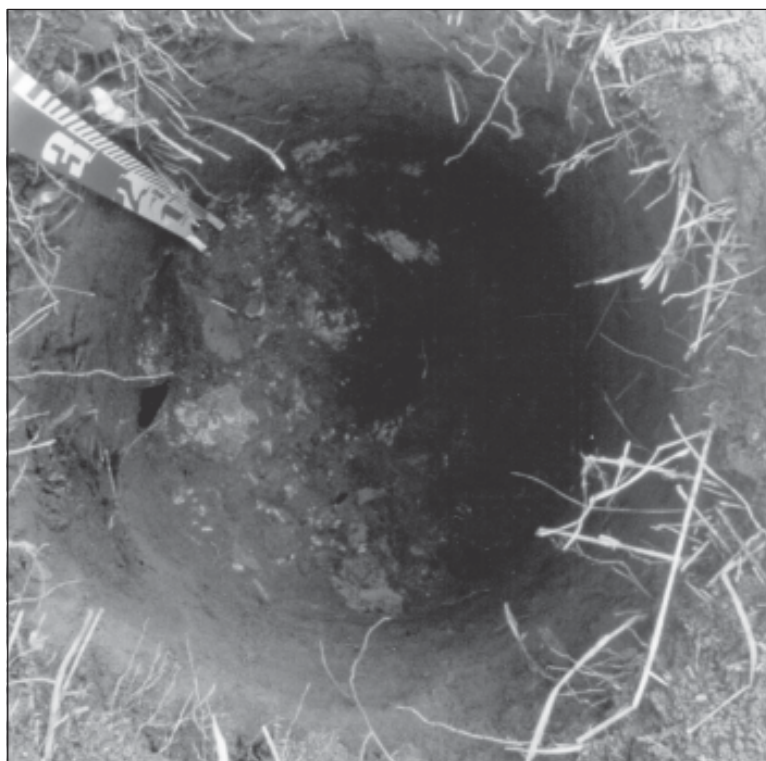


Figure 16 — Feature 32, a typical construction rubble feature.

Features 22 and 23. Verifying the speculations will require additional archeological investigations.

CONSTRUCTION RUBBLE

Auger tests encountered twenty-three instances (see Figure 18) of deposits characterized by the presence of jumbled brick, brick and mortar (Figure 16), or concrete. The articulation of the materials precluded any original construction events. Some features represent rubble from a structure razed in the immediate vicinity; others probably represent rubble carted away from a razed structure and used to fill mud holes (Ambrose Hertzog, personal communication 1996). Features 21, 24, and 25 represent remains of at least three slave cabins demolished in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Feature 33 is in the vicinity of the “nursery,” and Feature 45 is in the area once occupied by the sawmill.

MIDDEN

Dark humic-enriched soil encountered below the plow zone was recorded as a feature in nine auger

holes (Figure 19). Once certain this dark soil represented a midden deposit, we no longer recorded it as a feature but noted its presence on the auger test recording form. Tests containing midden materials had a greater number of artifacts compared to nonmidden auger holes. (The mean specimen count from midden feature auger holes is 29.2 compared to 3.4 from random samples of nonmidden auger holes.) As expected, midden occurred in the slave village. However, it was a surprise to discover midden deposits around the gin house and blacksmith shop. These occurrences may evidence sustained use of industrial areas by workers involved in ginning during the autumn and by farm hands who lingered at the blacksmith shop while equipment was being repaired.

SOIL STAINS

This category is defined as auger tests that exhibited soils with color changes produced by cultural activities as opposed to pedogenic processes. The cultural activities responsible ranged from digging post holes and disposing of ash or charcoal, to apparently filling abandoned cisterns. Eight soil stain features were recorded (Figure 20). Feature 15 may be related to the disposal of ash from the steam engine boiler at the cotton gin barn. Features 27 and 28 may represent fences associated with the slave quarters, whereas Features 39 and 42 represent fences associated with the slave hospital/overseer’s house and possibly the sawmill.

GRAVEL

A single occurrence of gravel representing a former location of Highway 119 was found at N2675 E1800.



A more comprehensive interpretation of these features appears in Chapter 5.

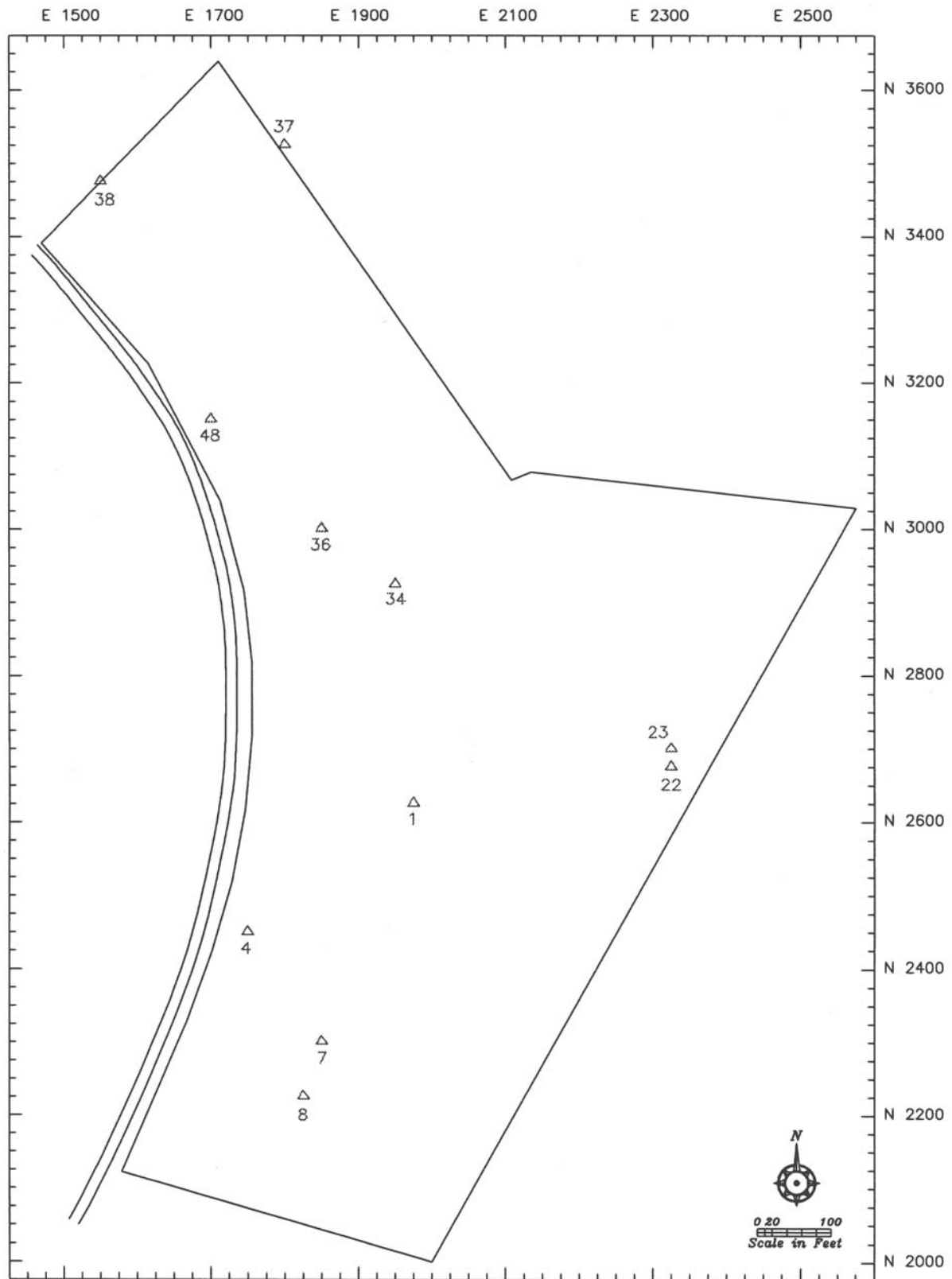


Figure 17 — Distribution of in situ features.

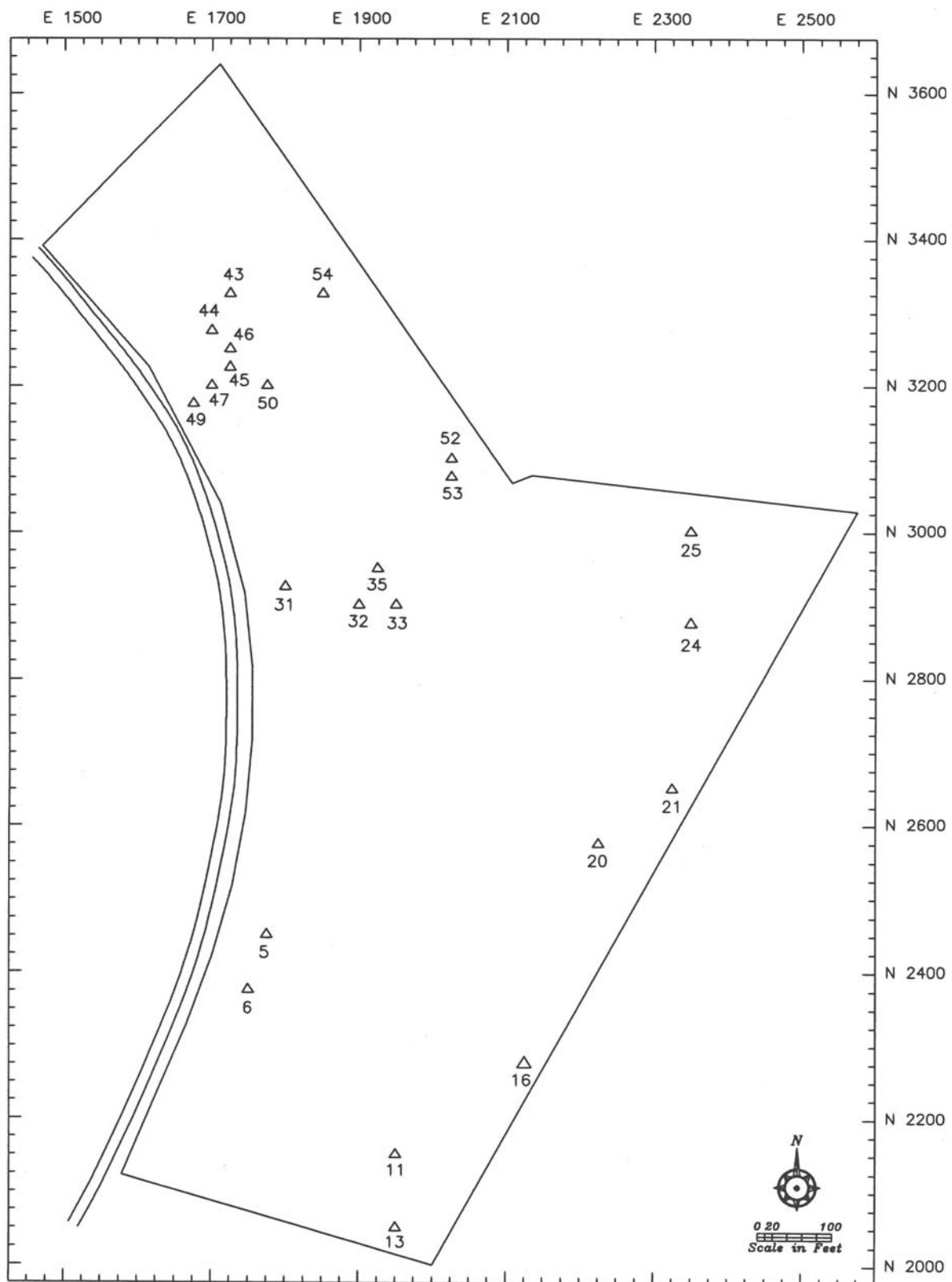


Figure 18 — Distribution of construction rubble features.

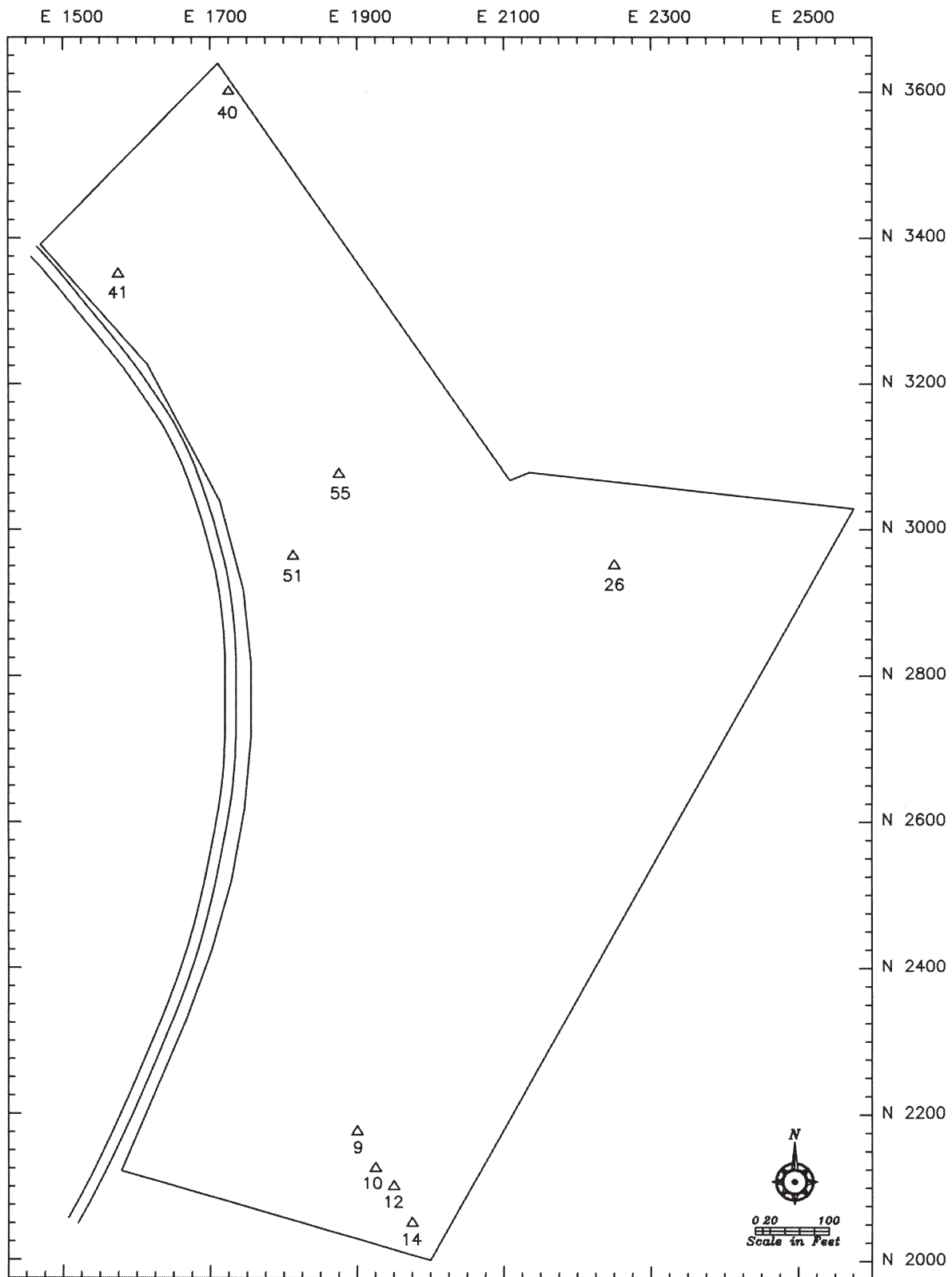


Figure 19 — Distribution of midden features.

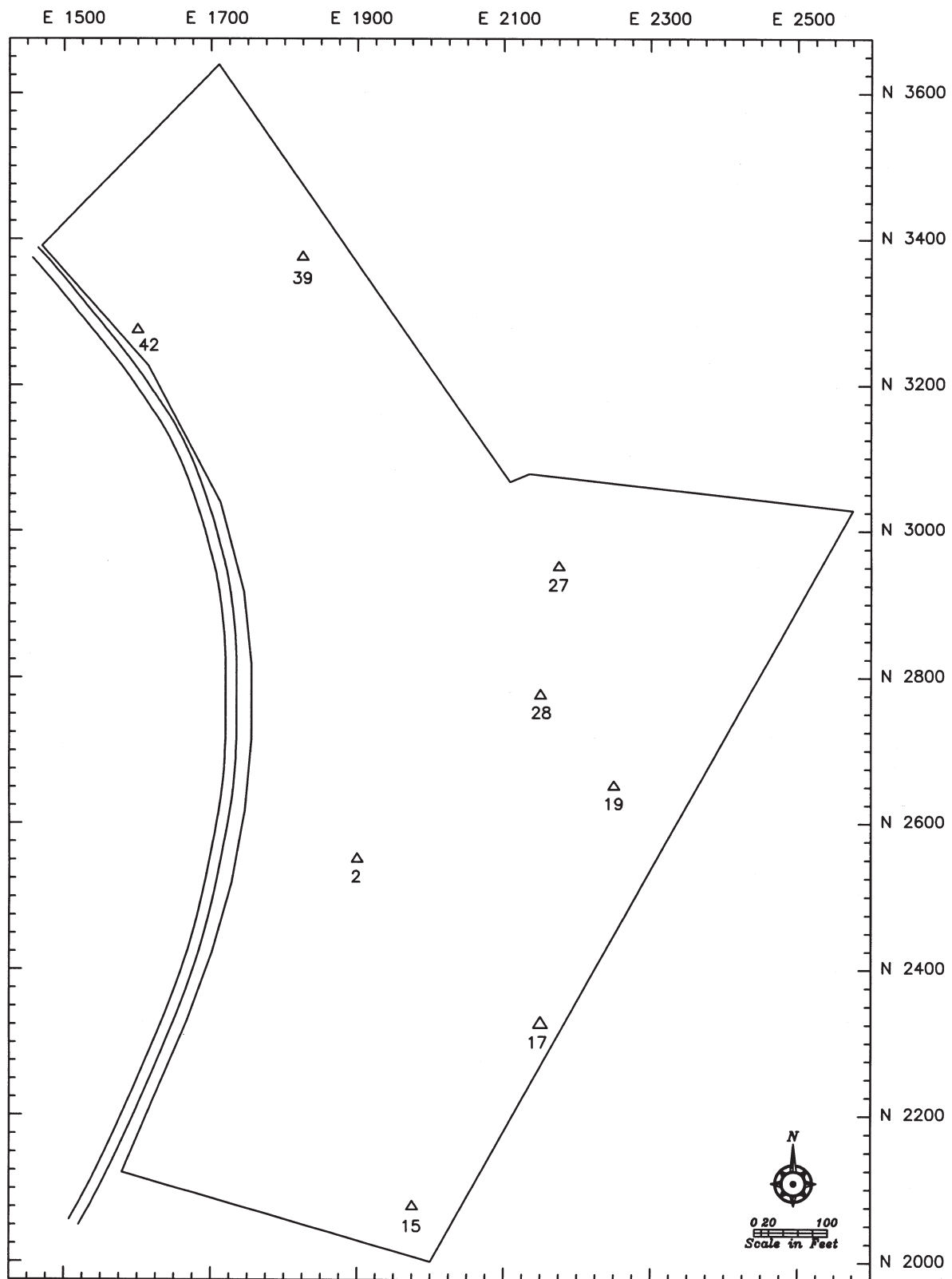


Figure 20 — Distribution of soil stain features.

Chapter 4

Analysis

The “Cane River Expedition” returned to the Southeast Archeological Center with thirty-one standard (12 x 16 x 10 inch) storage boxes of material. Also brought back were 1,215 auger test forms, field logs, fifteen rolls of 35 mm color film, and fifteen rolls of 35 mm black-and-white film. Numerous field drawings and other documentation created from seven weeks of fieldwork were also included in our baggage. The documentation had to be put into order and the material arranged so that the laboratory phase of the project could be approached in a systematic and efficient manner. Additionally, field equipment was cleaned, repaired, and returned to storage. When these chores were completed, the material was washed, dried, sorted, and rebagged for classification.

SEAC conforms to the National Park Service’s curatorial standards for archeological collections as published in the *Automated National Catalog System (ANCS) User Manual* (NPS 1987). These standards foster collection accountability by ensuring that specimens are counted and/or weighed and by requiring consistency in classification. Reference collections and published type descriptions are used for classification. Attribution of nomenclature follows *The Revised Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging* (Blackaby et al. 1988) and SEAC’s *Catalog Manual for Archeological Objects* (1990).

Analytical work proceeded systematically with most of the crew classifying the specimens, while one person entered the provenience data and classificatory variables from the analysis forms. The number of observations recorded for each specimen (or lot of identical specimens) in the Magnolia Plantation collection ranged from as few as six to as many as ten, with a total of more than 95,000 observations entered.

This system allowed for consistent classification and data entry, efficient error correction, and completion of the database within a short time af-

ter classification. Analysis and database building are time consuming and labor intensive. The person hours for laboratory work far exceed that which is required to collect the material and document it in the field. However, the database, once created, provides the basis for collection accountability, proper storage, and analytical studies of chronological relationships, activity patterning, land use, and other aspects of historical and archeological interpretation. The data are also used to plan the conservation and management of archeological resources. Although expensive to compile, the database facilitates data manipulation and analytical research at a level that might otherwise be unachievable or far too expensive. The analytical manipulations used to interpret the archeological record in relationship to the documented history of the plantation are presented in Chapter 5.

MAGNOLIA PLANTATION COLLECTION

The database constructed for the comprehensive subsurface testing program lists 19,813 specimens, which weighed 329 kilograms. Brick, mortar, and plaster tabulated and discarded in the field weighed an additional 259 kilograms (the total weight of the material was 588 kilograms or over 0.64 ton).

The collection’s composition reflects the plantation’s complex history. Variety is the collection’s outstanding characteristic. It took 127 terms to describe the 19,813 specimens. Sixty of the terms cover single items; fifty-five cover five or fewer objects each; and twelve additional terms cover ten or fewer specimens each. Seventy-six percent of the terms used in the classificatory scheme include fewer than 3 percent of the objects in the collection. Conversely, just over 97 percent of the collection is covered by fewer than 25 percent of the terms used. This variety makes generalizing about the collection difficult.

There are many ways the collection could be arrayed to enable the reader to grasp its complexity and variety. It could be presented as groups of items related to different functions, as groups of items associated with an activity or human behavior(s), or as chronological groups (e.g., Adams 1987; South 1979a, 1979b; Sprague 1981). Other options are to group the data by raw material (animal, vegetable, mineral, and synthetic or man-made) or by method of manufacture (mass produced or handmade, for example). Each method of presentation emphasizes one or more important attributes or characteristics of the specimens while simultaneously diminishing others, which may be equally important. Thus, no single, simple way to view the collection exists, and all methods would be tedious to some degree. Consequently, keeping the project's research goals in mind, these data will be conjugated in several ways to examine various aspects of the interpretation of the archeological evidence presented in Chapter 5.

The data has been placed into eight groups (Table 3). By combining a large number of culturally or behaviorally related artifact classes into a small number of groups, we can create a simple, straightforward tabular presentation of all the material from the comprehensive subsurface testing program.

Six of the groups pertain to the present research goals. They combine attributes that can be related to aspects of cultural behavior, plantation activities, or agricultural technology. These groups are

made up of artifact types that go a long way in determining the location of structures we know once existed at Magnolia Plantation and the activities that took place there. The two other groups include prehistoric Native American specimens and unclassified objects. These will be discussed first so they can be put aside since they do not have the potential to relate much about the history of Magnolia Plantation in the eighteenth- through mid-twentieth-centuries.

UNCLASSIFIED GROUP

At the beginning of the analysis phase of the project, we decided that unless an item identification was correct to a reasonable degree of certainty, it would be relegated to an unclassified, unknown, or indeterminate category. Unfortunately, approximately 20 percent of the collection (Table 4) could not be classified beyond the material from which it was made. For nine of the objects (0.045 percent of the collection) even the material could not be satisfactorily determined.

Ninety-four percent of the items in this group were unidentifiable metal fragments. Most were thin heavily rusted iron, probably representing tin cans. Generally, these metal fragments offer little analytic or chronological value. The canning industry was introduced into the United States in the 1820s (Buckles 1978:440–441). Although, some of the unidentified fragments may be from early tin cans, most probably postdate the introduction of the crimped “sanitary” can during the

Table 3 — Magnolia Plantation analytical groups.

<i>Group</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>% Count</i>	<i>Weight (Gr)</i>	<i>% Weight</i>
Unclassified	3,933	19.85	9,517.52	2.896
Native American	20	0.10	25.71	0.008
Agricultural	706	3.56	13,844.37	4.213
Structures	4,487	22.67	281,867.17	85.781
Food	9,375	47.32	20,262.50	6.167
Clothing	100	0.50	328.67	0.100
Personal	88	0.43	533.53	0.162
Fauna and Flora	1,104	5.57	2,211.15	0.673
Total	19,813	100.00	328,590.62	100.000

Table 4 — Unclassified group.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Charcoal	93	32.60
Clay, fired	1	2.26
Metal fragments	3,690	9,326.84
Paper (tape?)	2	1.38
Plastic fragments	117	46.97
Shell	1	0.10
Unidentified	9	100.72
Wood fragments	20	6.65
Total	3,933	9,517.52

1880s (Buckles 1978:440–441). Fragments of wire or nails mostly comprise the rest of this category. The second most numerous item was plastic, most of which was thin, wrapping or packaging film. Small amounts of unidentifiable biological remains (wood and shell) are also included here.

NATIVE AMERICAN GROUP

The small number ($n = 20$) of recovered Native American specimens (Table 5) consisted of lithics and ceramics. Their dispersed distribution across the park and low frequency (0.1 percent of the collection) and the absence of any observation suggesting an in situ prehistoric occupation indicates that Native American use of this area was neither intensive nor significant. Nonetheless, future archaeological investigators should consider the po-

Table 5 — Native American group.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Core	1	1.79
Debitage	3	1.56
Flake	6	2.73
Polished stone	1	1.87
Pottery sherds	8	17.20
Shatter	1	0.56
Total	20	25.71

tential for discovering additional prehistoric data in the park.

Dr. Pete Gregory and Dr. Tommy Hailey, Northwestern State University archeologists, and Jeff Girard, Office of the Louisiana State Archaeologist, examined the specimens in February 1997. In their opinion, two shell-tempered sherds are characteristic of the Emory ceramic series of Caddo affiliation. Six dark-colored sand-tempered sherds may represent historic period Choctaw materials. We debated whether or not the single piece of polished stone represented a water-rolled polished pebble or a fragment of a pipe bowl, but came to no firm conclusion.

AGRICULTURAL GROUP

This group of artifacts comprised 3.56 percent of the collection (Table 6) by count and 4.2 percent by weight. The group is divided into three subgroups: field paraphernalia, machinery, and tools and accessories.

Table 6 — Agricultural group.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Field paraphernalia	544	2,476.54
Machinery	130	9,751.64
Tools and accessories	32	1,616.19
Total	706	13,844.37

Field Paraphernalia

Objects associated with agricultural fields comprise this group (Table 7). They include remnants of fence posts, fence wire, barbed wire, fence staples, and nails.

The artifacts from this assemblage were used to separate agricultural areas from one another or from other activity areas and to keep livestock penned in or out of the fields.

The presence of barbed wire at Magnolia Plantation postdates 1875 (Buckles 1978:448). Pipe for crop irrigation and ceramic tiles for improving field drainage are also included in this subgroup.

Table 7 — Field paraphernalia.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Barbed wire	49	352.22
Drain tile	9	63.77
Fence nail	1	2.80
Fence post	2	346.20
Fence staple	98	597.15
Fence wire	384	1,017.32
Irrigation pipe	1	97.08
Total	544	2,476.54

Machinery

This subgroup (Table 8) is composed of artifacts related to agricultural machinery, such as tractors, mowers, cultivators, harvesters, combines, and cotton pickers. Some items may be related to transportation and probably came from the trucks or automobiles used for the main economic endeavor of the plantation. Other items, such as two single-tree center clips and the horseshoe (Figure 21), are indicative of the use of draft animals for farming. Unfortunately, these artifacts could not be assigned to a discrete temporal period.

Two matching brass fasteners (Figure 22) are also included in this group. They have octagonal flat heads that measure five-eighths of an inch across. The shafts are approximately half an inch long and appear to have been purposely bent. A star is centered on the machine-stamped faces and the words “Hungerford N.Y.” follow the circumference. Their function could not be determined.

In discussing artifact distribution in Chapter 5, I note that while some of the items may relate to other activities, their inclusion does not severely skew the distributions. Items that might be placed elsewhere represent a small percentage of this subgroup (63 percent of the terms in Table 8 represent only 17 percent of the total items).

Tools and Accessories

A small percentage (4.5 percent) of the agricultural group consists of tools associated with farming or used to maintain farm equipment (Table 9).

Table 8 — Machinery.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Auto/truck window glass	1	12.07
Ball bearing	1	6.76
Bolt	27	1,750.46
Bracket	1	74.56
Brake/clutch foot pad	2	53.39
Clamp	1	16.12
Cultivator point	1	80.61
Eye bolt	1	74.76
Fastener, brass	2	3.85
Flange	1	41.33
Gear	1	91.16
Handle	3	179.95
Horseshoe	1	493.90
Hose	4	96.09
Inner tube	3	29.92
Machine part (unknown)	7	855.10
Mechanical linkage	1	506.40
Nut	10	535.30
O-ring	1	779.30
Plate	12	1,600.18
Plug	1	28.26
Radiator thermostat	1	33.35
Ring	4	144.47
Rivet	1	0.82
Rod	8	1,296.53
Rod, threaded	1	34.00
Rubber fragment	11	30.46
Shim	1	23.37
Sickle bar blade	1	23.60
Single-tree center clip	3	673.41
Spindle	2	83.88
Spring	1	15.42
Thumbscrew	1	28.71
Tire	3	3.13
Valve	1	1.56
Washer	9	49.46
Total	130	9,751.64

We have included rope and chain because these are tools in the sense that they were used to hook up or control draft animals or machinery for plowing, cultivation, or other farming activities.



Figure 21 — Singletree center clips and a horseshoe.

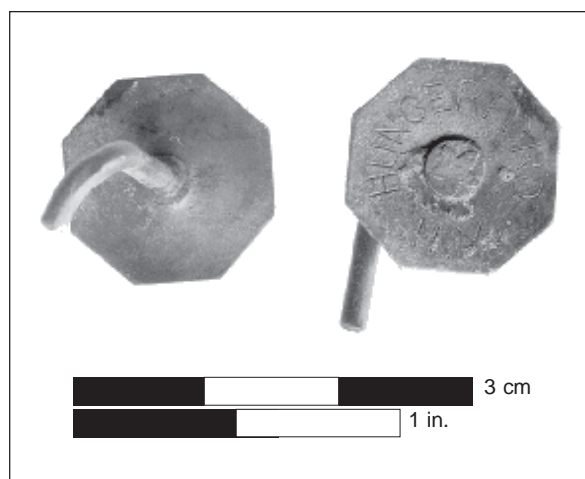


Figure 22 — Brass fasteners.

Table 9 — Tools and accessories.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Bale seal	1	2.28
Chain	4	559.21
File	2	131.16
Harrow point	1	36.62
Mattock	1	414.50
Metal banding	18	408.13
Rope	5	64.29
Total	32	1,616.19

One cotton bale seal and eighteen pieces of steel banding or strapping were recovered. The bale seal measures 0.64 inches in diameter and is stamped with the number “326” (Figure 23). These objects represent either leftover material used in packaging bulky materials (e.g., cotton bales) for transport from the plantation or discarded packaging material from bulky goods and supplies brought to the plantation. The remaining objects in this subgroup are a fragment of a mattock and fragments of a bastard file (Figure 24).

STRUCTURES GROUP

Specimens relegated to this group (Table 10) constitute nearly 23 percent of the collection by count and 86 percent by weight (brick, brick bats, mortar, and plaster were not counted). For convenience in presentation, this group was divided into three subgroups: (1) structure elements or building materials, such as bricks, mortar, plaster, and build-



Figure 23 — Cotton bale seal.



Figure 24 — Mattock fragment and bastard file fragment.

Table 10 — Structures group.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Structure elements	4,075	279,783.60
Electrical/plumbing	11	409.49
Furnishings	401	1,674.08
Total	4,487	281,867.17

ing hardware (hinges, pintles, etc.); (2) electrical and plumbing systems; and (3) structure furnishings, including coal and other necessary or desirable accessories for daily life, such as clocks, mirrors, and lamps. This group was created for distributional studies to facilitate identifying locations of structures no longer extant at the park.

Structure Elements

As might be expected, this subgroup formed the bulk of the collection by weight. Brick, mortar, and plaster were not counted because such counts are meaningless in the present context. For example, three in situ bricks provide more information about

a structure's location than five times their weight of rubble. Instead, weights of these materials were recorded as a consistent and reliable measure of their distribution across the site. The items in this group (Table 11) comprise the intrinsic fabric of the structures at Magnolia Plantation. Besides bricks, mortar, and nails, the group contains roofing materials, including roofing nails with lead seals, door and shutter hinges and pintles, beams and boards, and window panes and screens.

Nails were identified as either wire or machine cut. The machine-cut nails ($n = 804$) post-date 1830 and are virtually indistinguishable from those made today (Nelson 1968). Wire nails ($n = 3,000$) gradually replaced machine-cut nails, but did not become the dominant type in use until the 1890s (Nelson 1968). None of the other items could be specifically ascribed to either the nineteenth or twentieth century.

Table 11 — Structure elements.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Beam	1	195.40
Board	14	19.30
Brick	0	239,592.77
Concrete	1	1,260.00
Flashing	7	10.13
Hinge	2	255.45
Mortar	0	20,155.82
Nail	3,804	13,458.46
Pintle	2	106.64
Plaster	0	189.00
Roofing nail	19	40.10
Roofing paper	2	0.49
Roofing tile	2	3,177.10
Screen	3	0.65
Screw	5	58.55
Shingle	27	190.74
Spike	11	937.44
Tile	4	8.50
Window pane	171	127.06
Total	4,075	279,783.60

Table 12 — Electrical and plumbing systems.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Electrical terminal	1	57.55
Fuse	2	3.05
Insulator	2	52.48
Light bulb	3	11.59
Pipe	1	68.80
Pipe fitting (union)	2	216.02
Total	11	409.49

Electrical and Plumbing Systems

Because electricity was not available at Magnolia until after World War II, the eight electrical components in this subgroup (Table 12) provide evidence of structural renovation and improvements after the mid-1940s (Malone 1996:106). These components included two fuses, one glass insulator fragment, three light bulb fragments, and an electrical terminal. The most unique item in this subgroup is a glass insulator for a fuse that is embossed on the base with the words “Miller Fuse.” An attempt to identify the company was made by contacting the Electrical Products Sales Corporation (EPS), which has one of the largest inventories of terminals and fuses in the United States. A customer representative was unable to locate any information on this fuse.

Plumbing supplies consisted of a single piece of one-inch diameter galvanized pipe and two unions.

Structure Furnishings

This group of items relates to furnishings (or pieces of furnishings) commonly associated with domestic structures (Table 13). Therefore, it was no surprise to find remnants of dry-cell batteries, furniture tacks, gas or kerosene lamps, and mirrors. Two handles for tin buckets or pails were also assigned to this subgroup. These buckets may have been used to draw water from cisterns on the plantation. No specific chronological date could be determined for these handles.

Table 13 — Furnishings.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Basket	1	7.41
Box cover, brass	1	27.26
Bucket handles	2	50.97
Clock part	1	23.47
Coal	157	181.70
Disk	2	104.16
Dry-cell battery	11	28.87
Furniture clasp	1	1.57
Lamp chimney fragments	4	0.93
Mirror	33	66.90
Ornament	1	1.34
Slag	183	1,174.62
Tack	4	4.88
Total	401	1,674.08

The eleven cylindrical battery cores varied in size. No determination could be made regarding their specific use. They are probably remnants of household flashlights or battery packs for early radios. Also within this subgroup is a fragment consisting of a shaft with a cog that may have served as an internal adjustment for a large clock.

Other items listed in the furnishings subgroup include four colorless glass fragments. Their thickness and curvature is characteristic of the glass used for the chimneys of kerosene or gas “hurricane” lamps. Several shattered mirror fragments, four brass furniture tacks, a furniture clasp (Figure 25), a pin-hinged rectangular brass box cover (Figure 26), a possible fragment of an ornamental



Figure 25 — Furniture clasp.



Figure 26 — Hinged brass cover.

tin box, and a fragment of an ornamental pot metal basket were also placed in this subgroup. Coal and slag fragments were included because they are indicative of the use of a furnace for either the heating of a dwelling or the manufacture of objects, as within the blacksmith shop.

FOOD GROUP

Objects related to food were the most common items in the collection. They represented over 47 percent of the items counted. For convenience in presentation, this group (Table 14) was divided into four subgroups: (1) preparation, storage, and serving (cooking gear, mixing and serving bowls, table service); (2) procurement (because rifles and shotguns were used to procure game, components of the hunting system are included); (3) consumption; and (4) packaging.

Table 14 — Food group.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Preparation	8,309	15,921.46
Procurement	19	93.39
Consumption	19	175.29
Packaging	1,028	4,072.36
Total	9,375	20,262.50

Food Preparation, Service, and Storage

Preparing, serving, and storing food required a variety of vessels, from which many fragments were found—clear reminders of the culinary arts practiced at Magnolia Plantation. In that many of the vessels represented by the sherds (Table 15) recovered from the testing could have served one, two, or all of these functions no attempt was made to further segregate them. However, some comments can be made about the vessel assemblage.

The ceramic vessel fragments are classified broadly into three categories based on paste vitrification: earthenware (including tin-enameled ware, pearlware, whiteware, and yellow ware), stoneware (including ironstone), and porcelain. Analytic separation into these categories was visual, with each category represented by one or more of the archeological ware types discussed herein. Ultraviolet light was used to enhance the visual identification and sorting of the refined earthenwares—pearlware, creamware, and whiteware. When exposed to ultraviolet light, these types fluoresce with different intensities (Mathews 1986). Glass is also discussed even though the fragments could not always be identified as vessels.

■ Tin-Enameled Ware

Tin-enameled wares are possible indicators of eighteenth-century occupation at Magnolia Plantation. This ware is typically distinguished from other wares by the characteristic flaking of its thick glaze on a porous, often buff-colored paste. The types of tin-enameled wares most often encoun-

Table 15 — Food preparation, storage, and serving vessel fragments.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Ceramic	1,895	4,346.95
Glass	5,349	9,628.81
Glass, unidentified	1,044	1,632.55
Pan, cast iron	1	272.60
Plastic	20	40.55
Total	8,309	15,921.46

tered on Colonial American archaeological sites are English delftwares, French faience, and Spanish or Italian majolicas. At Magnolia Plantation, only one fragment could be identified as possible delftware. Two other fragments were identified as tin-enameled, but could not be assigned to a specific type. These specimens may be comparable to the faience sherds recovered upriver at the Marie Trereze Coin-Coin and Pougier sites (Gregory, personal communication 1997).

■ *Creamware*

Creamware ceramics appeared on American sites by 1770 (Miller and Stone 1970:42–44). A refined earthenware, it is distinguished from later refined earthenware by a characteristic yellow- or green-colored pooling of glaze that collects in the crevices of the vessel (Noël Hume 1969:130). Twenty-

seven vessel fragments from the assemblage were identified as creamware. All were plain except for one fragment identified as mocha creamware. Mocha is the name given to ceramics exhibiting a fairly common seaweed-like motif (Figure 27). Used on creamwares, it was curiously first applied as a mixture of tobacco juice and urine (Noël Hume 1969:130).

■ *Pearlware*

Like creamware, pearlware is typically identified by the characteristic blue appearance of its glaze where it collects in vessel crevices. A pearlware fragment also has an overall bluish caste when compared with creamware or whiteware. Pearlware was introduced to the United States during the early 1780s and sold alongside creamware throughout the second decade of the nineteenth

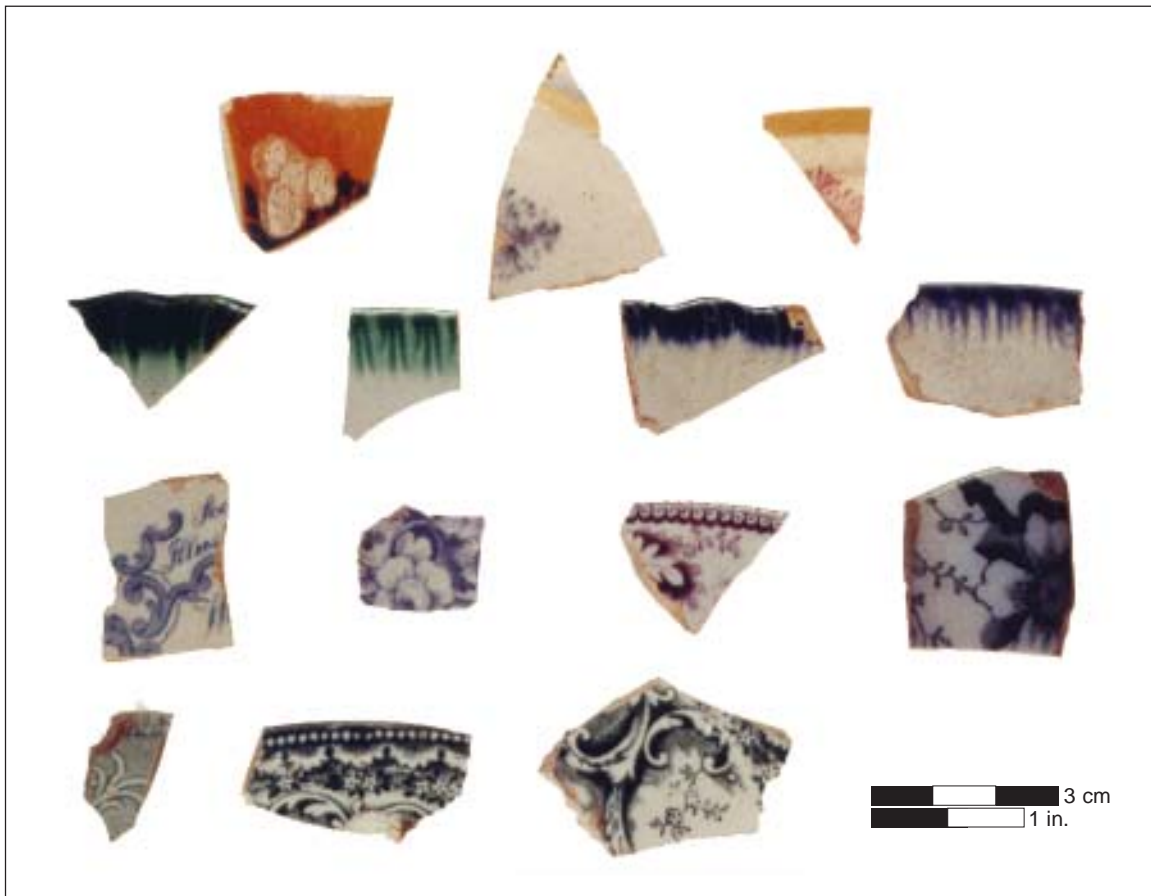


Figure 27 — Mocha creamware (row 1), shell-edged pearlware (row 2), and transfer printed whiteware (rows 3–4).

century (Noël Hume 1969:236; Price 1980:10). Most of the pearlware identified in the Magnolia Plantation ceramic assemblage is undecorated. Both green and blue shell-edged varieties were also identified (Figure 27). The seaweed-like motif appears on two fragments of pearlware in the collection. Six fragments are identified as annular wares, which include a variety of motifs from cat's-eyes to finger-painted "wormy" wares and various engine-turned specimens.

■ *Whiteware and Ironstone*

Not surprisingly, the most ubiquitous vessel type identified within the Magnolia ceramic assemblage is whiteware (Figure 27). No attempt was made to distinguish whiteware from later ironstones, unless the specimen was clearly marked as such. Whiteware was first introduced as a new refined earthenware during the 1820s and continues to be manufactured today. Whiteware resulted from attempts by English potters to approximate the white appearance of costly imported Chinese porcelains. New feldspathic fluxes were discovered that enabled potters to virtually eliminate pooling of glaze colorants in the crevices of vessels. At Magnolia Plantation this ware type is, by far, the most varied in color, decoration, and technique used.

■ *Yellow Ware*

Yellow ware was first imported from England in the latter half of the 1820s, mass produced in the United States by the 1840s, and declining in production by the turn of the century.

Liebowitz (1985) defines yellow ware produced in the United States as having a clear alkaline glaze. Within the assemblage, only two decorative varieties of yellow ware were identified: Rockingham and banded (Figure 28). Both are fairly common and probably indicative of occupation at Magnolia Plantation during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

■ *Stoneware*

Stoneware is fired at a higher temperature than earthenware and may be of any natural color clay ranging from pure white to red-brown and gray (Greer 1981:14). The stoneware recovered from the auger testing program represents 5.6 percent of the total ceramic vessel fragment assemblage. No doubt, stoneware served a multitude of utilitarian storage purposes on the farm.

■ *Porcelain*

Porcelain ceramic wares are extremely vitrified and translucent. They can be distinguished from other ceramic wares by a high-gloss glaze that



Figure 28 — Yellow ware (left), decorated porcelain, and a porcelain demitasse cup fragment.

does not flake (Noël Hume 1969:258). Porcelain was typically imported from Asia. Among early American archeological assemblages, it is often considered an indicator of the high status of those who used it. As porcelain became increasingly popular and available during the nineteenth century, it declined in quality (Noël Hume 1969:257). Most of the porcelain fragments in the ceramic assemblage are undecorated and probably represent more recent and readily available varieties. Decorated varieties are presented in Figure 28.

■ *Glass*

Unidentified glass fragments—most of which are probably related to preparation, storage, or serving—are tabulated in Table 16 by color, count, and weight. Table 17 tabulates definite glass vessel fragments by count and color. Although color is never the sole criteria for evaluating an entire glass vessel assemblage at a site, it is interesting to note that some colors are more likely to be

associated with certain container functions. For instance, liquor and beer products are typically bottled in amber or green glass because traditionally, before pasteurization, these colors helped prevent the sun from breaking down the yeast as it fermented in the bottles.

Amber or brown glass was widely used after 1860 for beer and whiskey (Fike 1987:13). Black glass was mostly used for heavier stouts, ales, and wines prior to 1870; colorless and green glass had a general application after 1875; and milk glass was commonly used for medicines, toiletries, food, and specialty items from the 1890s to the 1960s (Fike 1987:13). Blue-green glass has had a general and

Table 16 — Distribution of unidentified glass fragments by color.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Amber, light	6	6.04
Amber	42	57.68
Amber, dark	1	0.21
Black	1	0.37
Blue, light	14	8.68
Blue	7	4.30
Blue-green, light	32	50.58
Blue-green	1	1.63
Colorless	807	1,258.85
Copper-green, light	1	0.24
Green, light	33	42.43
Green	60	121.47
Green, dark	2	0.86
Solarized	10	30.10
White	13	29.19
Yellow, light	2	1.77
Indeterminate	12	18.15
Total	1,044	1,632.55

Table 17 — Distribution of vessel glass by color.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Amber, light	32	32.87
Amber	532	803.75
Amber, dark	196	750.72
Black	2	.65
Blue, light	166	284.67
Blue	42	55.96
Blue, dark	15	24.08
Blue-green, light	115	216.66
Blue-green	16	28.24
Blue-green, dark	2	3.92
Colorless	3,744	6,206.12
Copper-green, light	41	38.43
Copper-green	20	31.20
Copper-green, dark	1	0.17
Green, light	97	255.63
Green	111	242.35
Green, dark	1	2.26
Pink, light	2	1.96
Purple	3	10.42
Purple, dark	2	2.09
Red	1	2.91
Solarized	143	486.68
White	38	67.36
Yellow	3	2.26
Indeterminate	24	77.45
Total	5,349	9,628.81

versatile application since the introduction of glass bottles (Fike 1987:13).

A notably large percentage of the glass assemblage is solarized. Solarized glass is amethyst in color resulting from a chemical reaction of manganese due to prolonged exposure to sunlight. This glass is an excellent temporal indicator because the supply of manganese to the United States was interrupted with the advent of World War I, and selenium immediately replaced manganese as the dominate decolorizing agent used in American glass manufacturing (Colcleaser 1967:19).

Food Procurement

Commissary rations, garden vegetables, pork, beef, chicken, and mutton—all available on the plantation at one time or another during its history—were supplemented with game and fish. Items in the food procurement group (Table 18) relate to the hunting activities of the plantation's residents. While hunting and fishing may be viewed as recreational activities or sports, they were also a means of supplementing the regular diet.

Except for one possible gunflint (Figure 29), all the items identified within Magnolia's material culture assemblage as relating to food procurement are components of ammunition. Three lead bullets were identified—a .38 caliber, a .32 caliber, and a 7.62 millimeter standard military issue. The presence of the military bullet and a military identification tag on the site, probably attests to the proximity of Fort Polk—a large military base and training facility. Most of the brass cartridge cases were identified as .22 caliber and probably

Table 18 — Food procurement.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Bullet	3	29.56
Case, cartridge	11	27.72
Gunflint	1	2.10
Shell, shotgun	2	5.87
Shot	2	28.14
Total	19	93.39

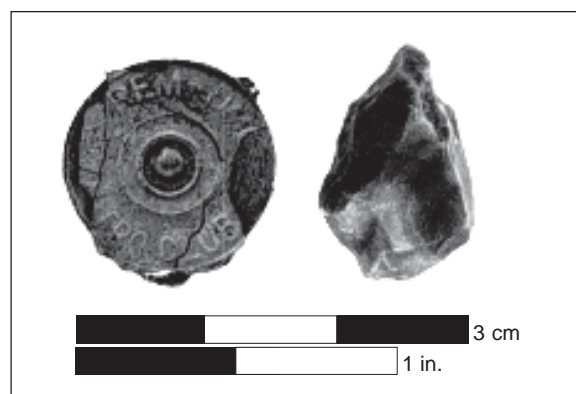


Figure 29 — Shotgun shell cap and possible gunflint.

used for hunting large fowl and small mammals, such as rabbits and squirrels. Also represented are one .45 caliber and three .38 caliber cartridges. These larger sizes are probably associated with recreational target practice on the plantation. Two shotgun shell fragments were also recovered. One shell was too corroded to determine the manufacturer, the other (Figure 29) was stamped "REM UMC", "16", and "Nitro Club".

Food Consumption

Table 19 illustrates the items in this category, which include a cup, knives, forks, and other implements related to eating or drinking. Although other items, such as the vessel fragments listed in Table 15, might have been included here, this arrangement seemed appropriate since distribution studies (see Chapter 5) were based on group memberships.

Table 19 — Food consumption.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Demitasse cup	1	6.73
Fork	6	35.71
Knife	2	83.29
Pull-top	8	4.15
Soup spoon	1	14.92
Trivet	1	30.49
Total	19	175.29



Figure 30 — Cutlery.

Nineteen items were assigned to the food consumption group. Most can be directly linked with eating or drinking, although these too could have been included with the food preparation group. Of particular note in this group is a single incomplete porcelain demitasse cup (see Figure 28). The vessel is undecorated and does not appear to be from an expensive set. In general, the cutlery (Figure 30) and other utensils assigned to this group are inexpensive having been made primarily of plated metals.

Food Packaging

This subgroup (Table 20) contains items that can be directly linked to the storage or packaging and containerizing of foodstuff and beverages. Although more than three thousand metal fragments were found, many were likely from tinned goods. Because tin cans could have stored other materials, these items have not been included here.

Two amber glass fragments were identified as fragments of two beer bottles. One is embossed with the letters “bot...” on its base; the base of the

Table 20 — Food packaging.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Bottle	168	1,286.12
Bottle, beer	3	108.73
Bottle, liquor	2	6.43
Bottle, soft drink	72	329.66
Bottle, wine	460	1,177.28
Can	214	590.71
Cap	9	47.95
Cap, bottle	65	26.40
Foil	10	2.64
Jar	4	179.54
Key, can	1	2.79
Lid	1	68.81
Liner, lid	13	15.06
Scrap	3	224.09
Seal, jar lid	2	6.13
Wrapper	1	0.02
Total	1,028	4,072.36



Figure 31 — Coca Cola bottle fragments, a Faygo bottle cap, and an enameled pop bottle fragment.

other is embossed “R & Co.” The name of the latter company is known to have appeared on amber export beer bottles dating from 1880 to 1900 (Toulouse 1971:439). The other fragment is similar to the glass from modern amber beer bottles. Interestingly, there are relatively more wine than beer bottle fragments—perhaps a reminder of the French heritage of the Rivière aux Cannes.

Soda pop was a popular beverage at Magnolia Plantation judging by the number of bottle fragments recovered. A modern colorless soda bottle rim with an aluminum screw top that reads “Faygo” was recovered (Figure 31). Another clear glass vessel fragment (Figure 31) is enameled with a red and white banner reading “...Beve...” (Beverage). The specific manufacturer could not be determined. Sixty-nine fragments representing one Coca-Cola bottle are also included in this group (Figure 31). The bottle dates to the twentieth century and was manufactured by the Natchitoches Bottling Company.

Other items categorized as food packaging are various wine bottle fragments, bottle caps, jars, lid liners, and other canning elements. The majority of these items are not temporally diagnostic.

CLOTHING GROUP

This group (Table 21) consists of items associated with wearing apparel, such as buttons, buckles, snap fasteners, and zippers, as well as remnants of shoes and cloth. The items could have been associated with domestic structures, however, for distribution studies, it seemed wiser to group them separately as they could have also been discarded in trash dumps, lost in the fields during the workday, or otherwise misplaced.

Most of the items in this group are buttons. A total of forty-four buttons were identified in the assemblage. Buttons are listed by material type in Table 22. Only the iron and brass buttons have either company names or trademarks molded or stamped on them (Figure 32). One backing to a brass button is stamped “Scovill & Co.” Buttons with this name were probably manufactured between 1840 and 1850 (Luscomb 1967:174). Although the iron buttons are heavily corroded, three could be read after several hours of cleaning in an

Table 21 — Clothing.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>
Buckle	2	15.49
Buckle, belt	2	59.81
Buckle, shoe	1	2.02
Button	44	48.75
Cloth fragment	1	0.35
Clothespin	4	16.14
Glove	4	41.36
Grommet	11	3.00
Leather	1	1.87
Shoe	22	127.29
Snap, fastener	4	3.99
Zipper	4	8.60
Total	100	328.67

Table 22 — Buttons by material type.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Count</i>
Aluminum	1
Bone	3
Brass	5
Glass	6
Iron	11
Plastic	12
Porcelain	3
Shell	2
Unknown	1
Total	44

ultrasonic tank. One of these reads “Panama” over the word “Mobile”. It could not be determined whether this refers to a military campaign or if the button is associated with a southern railroad line. Another iron button appears to be molded with the letters “CORLS BOSS”. Research on this button garnered no specific information. A third iron button reads “Wrangler” on its face, no doubt the remains of the popular jeans typically worn by many southern farmers.



Figure 32 — Buttons.

PERSONAL GROUP

Items included in this group (Table 23) are primarily personal property, although actual ownership or use may have been shared. If so, sharing would have been within the same household. Medicine, toiletry bottles, and other items related to grooming or hygiene are represented in this group, as are objects of education, recreation, entertainment or pleasures, and coinage.

One complete bottle and several bottle fragments are included in this group. Many of the fragments had the characteristic embossing and paneled attributes typically associated with patent medicines, which, from 1850 to 1950, were not subject to government scrutiny and thus widely available (Fike 1987:3). Unfortunately, none of the

Table 23 — Personal items.

Item	Count	Weight (gr)
Ball	1	52.58
Bead	3	1.48
Bottle, medicine	7	344.93
Bottle, toilet	14	21.55
Brooch	1	3.74
Coin	4	14.54
Comb	2	1.34
Eraser, pencil	3	2.07
Harmonica	1	1.19
Label	3	1.10
Marble	3	21.61
Pencil, slate	1	0.76
Pipe, tobacco	20	30.97
Tag, GI identification	1	4.67
Token, tax	2	1.84
Toothbrush	1	0.48
Watch, pocket	3	6.96
Writing slate	18	21.72
Total	88	533.53

fragments retained enough lettering to determine the product or manufacturer. Only the complete bottle (Figure 33) could be identified. Aqua in color with six side panels, the bottle is embossed “PEPTO-MANGAN GUDE” on the side and “Dr. A Gude & Co” on the base. According to Fike (1987:176), the product was first introduced in 1891. Through research, we learned of the ingredients of Dr. Gude’s tonics from the wording on some product labels, which read:

GUDE’S PEPTO-MANGAN, Neutral Organic Compound. Alcohol 16%. A Combination of the Peptonates of Iron and Manganese in Palatable, Easily Digested Form. A Stimulant and Tonic.

We have speculated that the World War II military identification tag (dog tag) (Figure 34) may represent evidence of the war games played in the Natchitoches area by General George Patton’s



Figure 33 — Patent medicine bottle.



Figure 34 — Dog tag.

Third Army prior to the Allies’ European invasion. However, it is more likely that this is an identification tag for a military dependent or civilian employee of the Department of Defense.

Because of the *terminus post quem* implications of the coins, they deserve additional com-

ment. Of the two U.S. pennies, one was minted in 1964, the other in 1989. One of the two U.S. nickels was minted in 1954. The date on the second, a Jefferson nickel, was illegible. However, the Jefferson nickel, which is still issued today, was introduced in 1938. All of the coins except the 1989 penny were probably lost by the residents of the quarters.

Aluminum sales tax tokens were used in several southern states from the mid-1930s until 1942 when aluminum was reserved for the war effort. The tokens could be purchased in 1, 1.5, 2, and 5 mil denominations. Two Louisiana 1 mil sales tax tokens (Figure 35) were found at Magnolia. Because of their recent age, the coins and tax tokens, unfortunately, tell us nothing about the earlier history of the plantation.

A woman's brooch (Figure 36), made of pot metal and set with white glass, is an example of personal adornment. Three pieces of what appears to be parts of a pocket watch measuring 3.5 centimeters in diameter (Figure 37) were recovered from the same auger test.

FAUNA AND FLORA GROUP

Nineteen taxonomic groupings for faunal and floral material were identified at Magnolia Plantation (Table 24). Most of this material was too fragmentary to assign to a specific taxon. Unidentified animal bone represented 82.61 percent of the collection by count, and unidentified plants accounted for 1.45 percent.

The sample of biological material is so small and fragmentary and the context so broad that it has limited value for drawing conclusions about the use of animals whether for labor (horses and mules) or consumption. However, note that both domestic animals and wild game, along with fish and turtle, are present in the collection. Clearly, pork, beef, and poultry (chicken bones are surely present among the unidentified bird remains) were raised and consumed by the residents of the plantation. Deer, rabbit, and raccoon also apparently contributed to the diet. We speculate that many of the species represented in our limited collection were prepared as stews for consumption at the slave village.

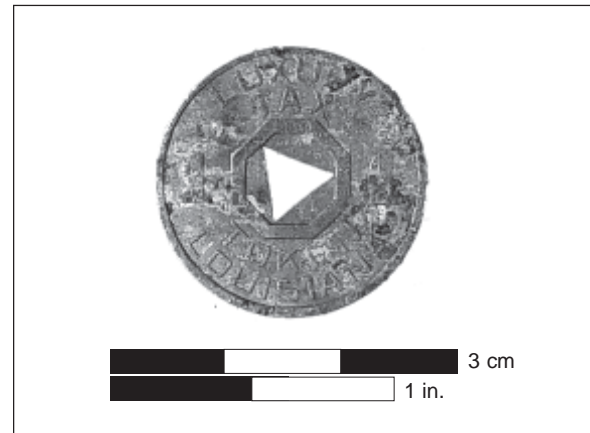


Figure 35 — A 1 mil Louisiana tax token.

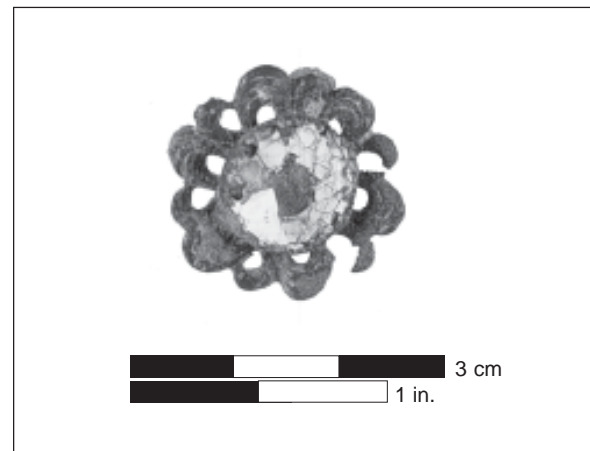


Figure 36 — Woman's brooch.



Figure 37 — Pocket watch parts.

Table 24 — Faunal and floral remains.

<i>Taxon</i>	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight (gr)</i>	<i>% Count</i>
Animals				
Animalia	Unidentified	29	11.57	2.63
Mammalia	Unidentified	883	1,664.32	79.98
Equidae	Horse	3	6.87	0.27
Bovidae	Cow	10	296.58	0.91
Suidae	Pigs	35	143.67	3.17
Cervidae	Deer	6	10.11	0.54
Procyonidae	Raccoon	1	1.45	0.09
Leporidae	Hares, rabbits	2	0.02	0.18
Aves	Birds	17	11.04	1.54
Meleagrididae	Turkey	1	0.75	0.09
Reptilia				
Testudinidae	Tortoises	33	23.13	2.99
Trionychidae	Soft shell turtles	3	1.26	0.27
Emydidae	Box turtles	1	4.07	0.09
Kinosternidae	Mud turtles	2	1.90	0.18
Osteichthyes	Bony fish	7	5.68	0.63
Sciaenidae	Drums	2	1.15	0.18
Ictaluridae	Freshwater catfish	2	1.58	0.18
Lepisosteidae	Gar	35	8.32	3.17
Bivalvia	Bivalves	11	14.98	1.00
Gastropoda	Snails	5	0.12	0.45
Subtotal		1,088	2,208.57	98.55
Plants				
Plantae	Plants	16	2.58	1.45
TOTAL		1,104	2,211.15	100.00

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the variety, size, and complexity of the collection recovered from the intensive fieldwork. Investigations were guided by the need to better understand the archeological resources on the eighteen acres of land now owned by the National Park Service. A major goal was to relate archeological findings to documented structures on the plantation and activities known to have taken place there. Another goal was to gather

enough data through these studies to develop plans for future archeological investigations at the park.

The analysis of recovered materials has in no way been exhaustive and complete. Much can and will be learned from additional data manipulation. The way in which the materials were recovered from the auger holes did not provide adequate control for temporal studies. Nonetheless, as shown in the following chapter, the collection can be used to identify, in a general sense, internal chronological events and patterns in the plantation's history.

Chapter 5

Artifact Patterning

In the next several pages, I will provide a prudent interpretation of results following six weeks of archeological fieldwork and several months of laboratory studies. The reader may recall that during June and the first half of July the Cane River Expedition sifted the soil and recorded the pertinent observations from 1,206 one-foot diameter auger holes. The reward for this effort was the accumulation of a collection of 19,813 archeological specimens, which were hauled back to Tallahassee to be washed, sorted, and analyzed. A database had to be created to record over 95,000 observations—observations that could be sorted, combined, grouped, divided, and otherwise manipulated to provide the data from which I could make reasoned and logical statements about what all of it meant. I have restricted my interpretation to those archeological matters that are germane to the problems and responsibilities that face the National Park Service in developing, interpreting, and managing the cultural resources at Magnolia Plantation.

As noted, the materials and data collected was quite varied. Consequently, we did not recover as large a sample of some items as I would have liked. Nonetheless, several categories of material remains are quite satisfactory and gathered in sufficient quantities to help me discover what lies buried at Magnolia Plantation and how the hidden remains relate to the LeComte-Hertzog family's stewardship of this piece of Creole heritage during the past two centuries.

I am aware that "perhaps the most insidious logical fallacy is that which allows us to over generalize on too little data" (Adams et al. 1995:121). And I keep in mind that our effort amounts to hardly a second's worth of work in the chronicle of the plantation's history. We spent less than fifty days examining 242 years of Creole occupation of the property. Furthermore, we examined hardly more than an atom of the compound called Magnolia Plantation. We excavated about twelve hun-

dred square feet of the approximate three quarters of a million square feet of land surface that compose the park's portion of the estate. This amounts to a sample of 0.16 percent. Fortunately, cultural behavior is not random; it is patterned. Also, we had the guidance of the Walmsley plat. Although not entirely accurate, it provided a mid-nineteenth century plan of the plantation.

ANALYSIS GROUP DISTRIBUTIONS

Figures 17 through 20 in Chapter 3 illustrate distribution by category of the features encountered. In this chapter, I illustrate the distribution of groups of artifacts that best explicate the archeological resources at the park. I will later present a chronologically sensitive version. This treatment of the data offers an accurate, albeit incomplete, view of some of the "periods" in northwest Louisiana plantation history.

In presenting distribution maps of the data, I was faced with two problems. First, how could we group the various items in a logical manner that would shed the most light on the problems being studied. Second, what was the best way to construct the maps so they would be meaningful without taking liberty with the facts. The most objective approach would have been to show the position (by individual auger hole) of every specimen we recovered; the most subjective, to show only finds that clearly illustrated a particular point of view or bias. I sought a middle perspective.

The Surfer surface mapping system was used to generate a series of contour maps for distribution analysis. Artifact weight data recovered from the auger tests was transformed into standard deviation units above and below the mean weight for each analysis category. These data were gridded using a Kriging algorithm, and seven standard deviation contours were plotted (-3 to +3) to cre-

ate the final maps. This technique produces legible maps with clear interpretations of artifact density within the site. Normalizing the data prior to mapping allows standardized contours and shading for each map, which facilitates comparison between the maps of this series (Dennis Finch, personal communication 1997).

Areas of interest on the Surfer artifact distribution maps are denoted by capital letters (e.g., *A*, *B*, *C*); subareas are denoted by lower case letters (e.g., *a*, *b*, *c*).

STRUCTURE GROUP

The distribution of items in the *Structure Group* (Figure 38) and of features in the *In Situ* and *Construction Rubble* categories (see Figures 17 and 18) indicate that structures once stood on what is now vacant ground. Concentrations of items east (*A*) and southeast (*B*) of the gin house are of particular interest. As yet, we do not have sufficient evidence to determine if concentration *A* represents the locus of the shed housing the boiler and steam engine or some other agrarian shelter.

In passing, the 1858 plat does not mark the location of the Cottage Buard, where relatives of Julia Buard LeComte resided in the nineteenth century. However, northwest of the gin house, near the road, a clearly defined and isolated area (Figure 38, *C*) measuring roughly 100 by 75 feet exhibits structure elements including one in situ brick feature (Feature 4) and two construction rubble features (Features 5 and 6). Betty Hertzog (personal communication 1998) recalls the cottage being situated in this area. In analyzing additional evidence, the hypothesis that area *C* is the Cottage Buard, or some other early structure, will be considered.

Structure Group material distributed in the slave village (*D*) appears to have an excellent correlation with the historic documentation presented by Malone (1996:48–49). The distribution of the archeological material actually provides a better depiction of the configuration of the slave village than Walmsley's schematic rendering. Concentrations of *Structure Group* material clarifying the slave village layout are depicted in lower case letters in Figure 38. The concentration denoted *a* is

not remarkable compared to other concentrations in the slave village. It most likely represents debris from repairs and renovations to Cabin 1.

Concentration *b* certainly marks the location of a cabin midway between Cabins 2 and 3 in the western rank of buildings. It lines up appropriately with Cabin 7. Immediately south of Cabin 8 in the second column from the west, and east of Cabin 1, lies concentration *c*. Moving to the east, there is a row of four distinct concentrations of structure material, three of them, *d*, *e*, and *g*, are clear whereas *f* is not as distinct. Nonetheless, their alignment and spacing clearly suggest another row of slave cabins. The park boundary forms a sharp angle east of this row. Only two other concentrations, *h* and *i*, were uncovered east of *d* through *g* within the narrowing park boundary. What evidence might be present north and south of these concentrations or east of *f* and *g* is unclear since testing could not be extended beyond the park boundaries.

In February 1997, Dennis Finch and I examined the cotton field north of the park boundary and observed four cabin ruins. These concentrations are in alignment with the cabins to the south and at a distance from one another that corresponds with the village plan. We also observed scattered bricks and artifacts in the cotton field immediately east of the slave village. There is no doubt that the concentrations are relicts of a formal arrangement of dwellings. These materials probably represent the remains of slave cabins that were torn down in the 1890s to supply material (brick) for rebuilding the Big House.

A concentration of *Structure Group* items (*E*) is found west of the south limits of the slave village. Although it does not conform exactly to the barn location on the Walmsley plat, which seems to be further east and south, the auger testing revealed no other likely spot for the barn.

Due north of *E*, we discovered an in situ pier (Feature 1). Probing failed to reveal additional piers or construction rubble in the immediate area, so the size, orientation, function, or age of this building cannot be determined. The Walmsley plat shows two small structures west of the slave village. He did not indicate their purpose. Malone

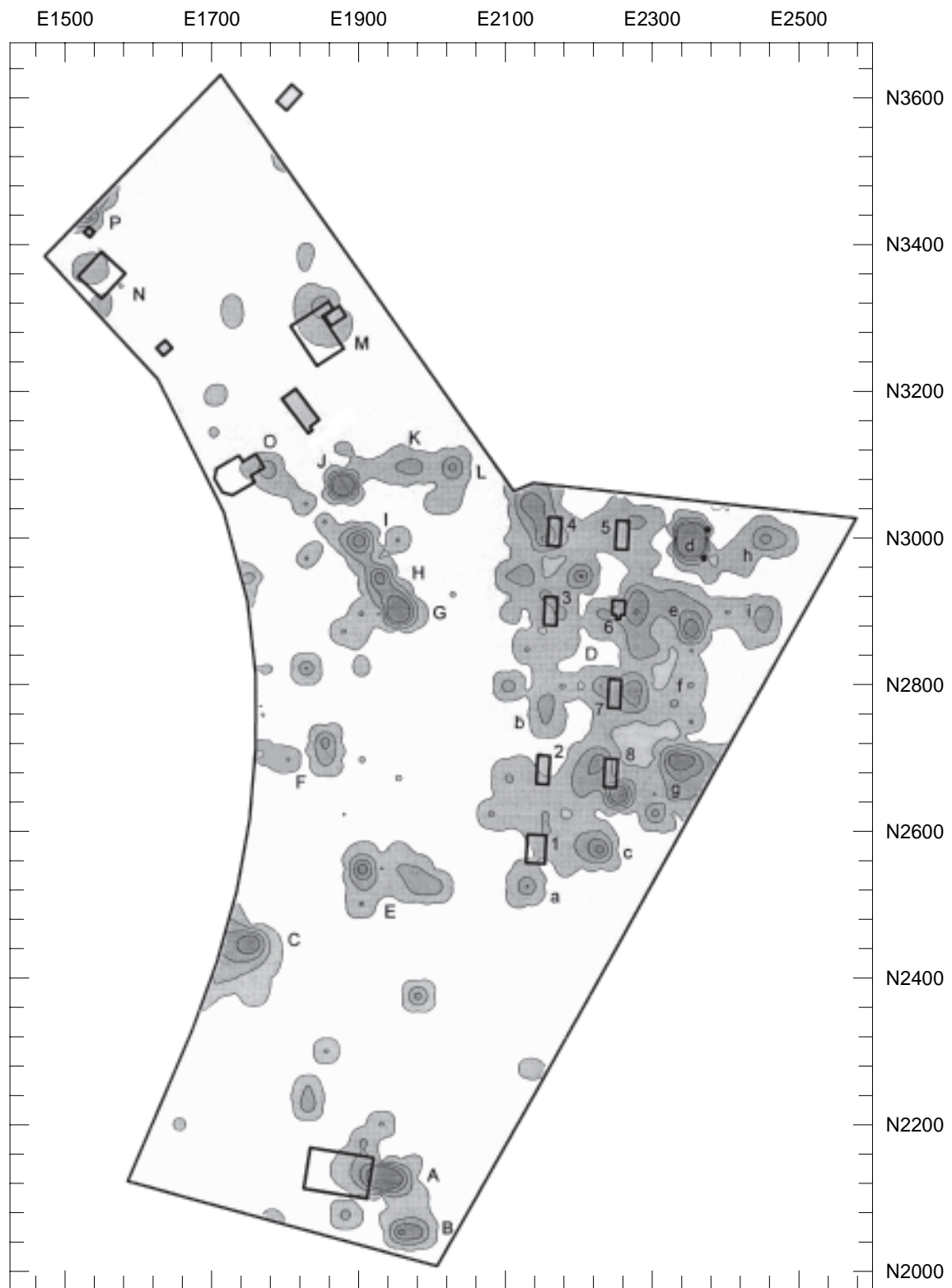


Figure 38 — Distribution of “Structure Group” data.

(1996:48) suggests that one structure may have been a dairy, the other a spinning and weaving shed. Auger results failed to provide evidence of any structures in the location shown by Walmsley. However, we encountered two concentrations of building debris in area *F*, a little to the north and west of the plat location. Feature 1 and the structure elements recovered at *F* may represent these buildings.

Approximately 150 feet west of Cabin 2, a concentration of material designated *G* approximates the position of the nursery mapped by Walmsley. We also recovered an in situ brick pier or foundation (Feature 34) and a construction rubble feature (Feature 33) at this location.

In a line running on a northwest angle from *G*, three more areas (*H*, *I*, and *J*) contain concentrations of *Structure Group* items. Areas *K* and *L* are situated approximately 100 and 150 feet east of area *J* respectively. Complex areas to decipher, these concentrations may represent the remnants of the agency, mill, and pigeonier as identified by Walmsley. Either areas *I* or *J* could contain remains of the agency. Features 48 (in situ) and 53 (construction rubble) at area *L* could be remnants of the piers that supported the pigeonier prior to its relocation to its current site. Unfortunately, if this explanation is true, it creates a major interpretive problem. Where are the remains of three structures—the bell tower, an unlabeled building, and the garden house—shown on the plat in an east-west trending line about half way between the slave hospital/overseer's house? As shown in Figure 38, there is no indication from the auger testing of two northeast-southwest trending alignments of buildings between the slave hospital/overseer's house and the slave village. An extensive archeological investigation of this area will be required to unravel the mystery of the missing structures.

As expected, we recovered *Structure Group* materials at the slave hospital/overseer's house (*M*). This standing structure has been modified, remodeled, renovated, and added to from the time Ambroise LeComte II built it during the second quarter of the nineteenth century (Yocum 1996:44). The materials we recovered are the archeological manifestation of this activity. Nor was it surpris-

ing to find evidence of structural materials in the vicinity of the blacksmith shop (*N*). This evidence represents repairs to the shop and possibly the fabrication of farming equipment.

Two other *Structure Group* concentrations deserve mention. The material found in area *O*, located at the southeast corner of the store, may be a continuation of the building materials contained in *J*, *K*, and *L* (the agency, mill, and pigeonier). Or, the material located at *O* may represent remains from the construction of the store itself.

The second concentration, found in area *P* on the north boundary of the park, is most intriguing. The Walmsley plat does not indicate a structure here. However, the archeological evidence suggests that one of some complexity indeed existed here sometime in the past. We recorded an in situ brick feature (Feature 38), and, during installation of the park boundary fence, additional remains were encountered (John Rawls, personal communication 1996).

The auger testing program clearly defined a number of areas that correlate with buildings depicted on Walmsley's plan of the plantation. The archeological evidence provides a much clearer understanding of the slave village layout than the schematic rendering provided in the 1858 plat.

AGRICULTURAL GROUP

The artifacts relegated to this group (see Tables 6–9) compose only 3.56 percent of the collection. The spatial distribution of these items (Figure 39) is consistent with a prediction that they would be associated with structures that had a primarily agrarian function. Concentrations associated with the gin house (Figure 39, *A*) and the blacksmith shop (Figure 39, *B*) relate to the use (gin house) and manufacture, repair, and maintenance (blacksmith shop) of farm tools. Not surprisingly, the auger tests at the slave hospital/overseer's house failed to produce any artifacts that could be placed in this category. Two concentrations (Figure 39, *C* and *D*) are situated in the vicinity of the structural group concentrations (Figure 38, *I* and *K*) south of the slave hospital/overseer's house. *Agricultural Group* area *C* does not seem to fit with any archeologically defined building; the same is true

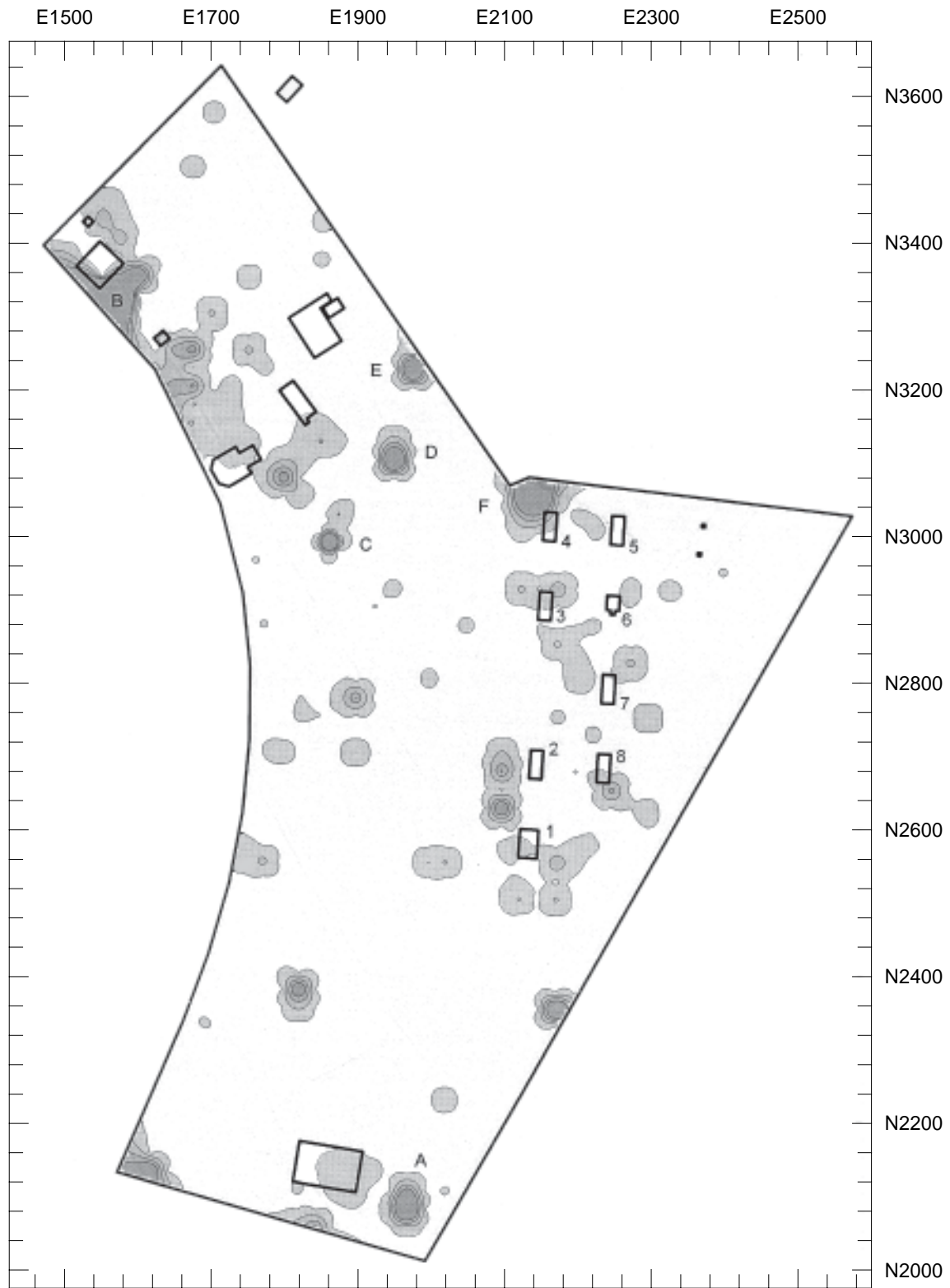


Figure 39 — Distribution of "Agricultural Group" data.

for area *D*. An agricultural group concentration is present northwest of Cabin 4, between it and some cabin ruins north of the park boundary (Figure 39, *F*). This area is noteworthy for the presence of other artifact groups and will be discussed further.

Although other concentrations of agricultural group materials are shown in Figure 39, none seem to represent any strong affiliation with structural evidence. The items composing these concentrations appear to be objects that were lost or discarded during the normal process of farming.

FOOD GROUP

The distribution of *Food Group* specimens (Figure 40) is consistent with the location of structures whose functions are known. As expected, *Food Group* items are concentrated at the slave hospital/overseer's house (Figure 40, *A*) and in the yard areas of the slave quarters (Figure 40, *B*). It was not unreasonable to find *Food Group* materials in the vicinity of the blacksmith shop (Figure 40, *C*), the store (Figure 40, *D*), and the gin house (Figure 40, *E*). Workers would have routinely consumed meals or snacks at these locations since these facilities were places of intense seasonal activity (the blacksmith shop and gin house) or, in the case of the store, a place where food was purchased. Interestingly, a fair amount of *Food Group* items were present in area *F*, which corresponds to the *Structure Group* concentration *C* in Figure 38. *Food Group* materials are present in the general vicinity of a structure along LA 119 (see Figure 38, *F*). A concentration of *Food Group* material (Figure 40, *G*) was present in the location of a structure (Figure 38, *I* and *J*), which I have suggested as the site of the agency or mill depicted on the Walmsley plat. These facilities would likely have been used for food storage or distribution.

CLOTHING GROUP

As expressed in Chapter 4, clothing items are expected to be distributed in and around domestic structures. The distribution of clothing items (Figure 41) fits the expected result quite neatly. The majority of specimens in this group were recovered from auger holes in the area occupied by the slave village (Figure 41, *A*). Lesser amounts oc-

curred around the slave hospital/overseer's house (Figure 41, *B*), east of the structure along LA 119, and at the gin house. None of these would be unusual loci for the casual loss of clothing items. Surprisingly, clothing items occurred as an isolated group (Figure 41, *C*) about 150 feet west of the slave hospital/overseer's house. This area may represent a laundering activity area.

PERSONAL GROUP

The distribution of items in this group (Figure 42) follows a predictable pattern. They occur in the slave quarters and around other structures where loss or disposal would be expected.

No personal items were found in the vicinity of the gin house or south of the slave village. Personal group and clothing group artifacts have similar distributions (compare Figures 41 and 42).

CHRONOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For a chronological perspective on the distribution of materials recovered from the auger testing program, the data were examined to determine which artifacts could be placed into temporally distinct groups that might have interpretive use. For several reasons, I could not create groups of artifacts that clearly divided the archeological collection into temporal periods relating to individual owners or residents (the LaCour, LeComte, and Hertzog families) or into periods relating to major regional or national historic events (the French, Spanish, and American periods; the Civil War; World Wars I and II). The primary reason was that the introduction of temporally significant artifact types did not coincide with ownership changes or major historical events. Furthermore, the time span of use of temporally significant artifact types tends to cross the dividing lines between ownership or historic periods (Figure 43). Nonetheless, creating distribution maps of selected segments of the collection (ceramics, cut and machine-made wire nails) offered the best chance for examining the internal chronology of the plantation's archeological resources and provided a general sense of Magnolia's history.

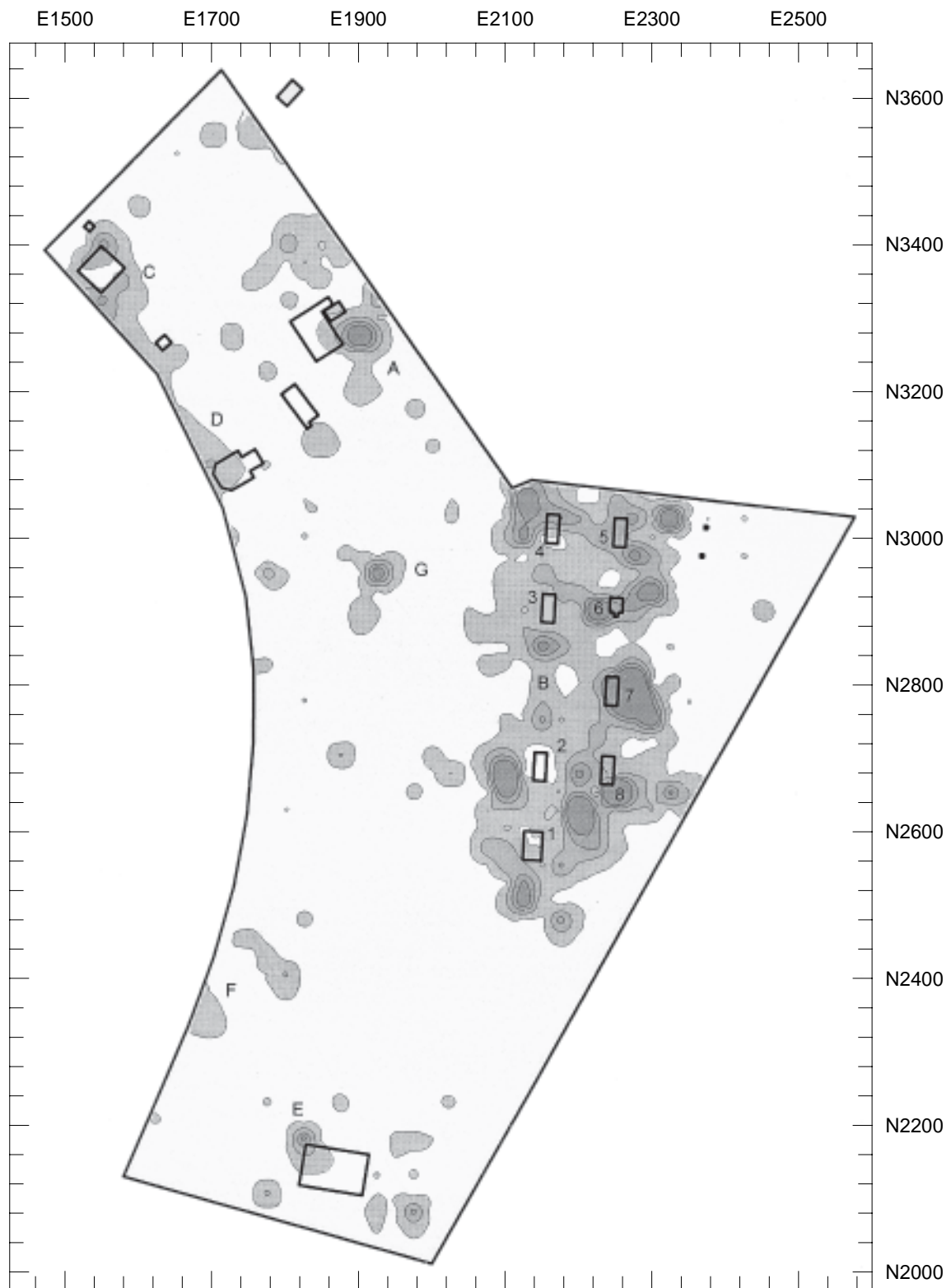


Figure 40 — Distribution of "Food Group" data.

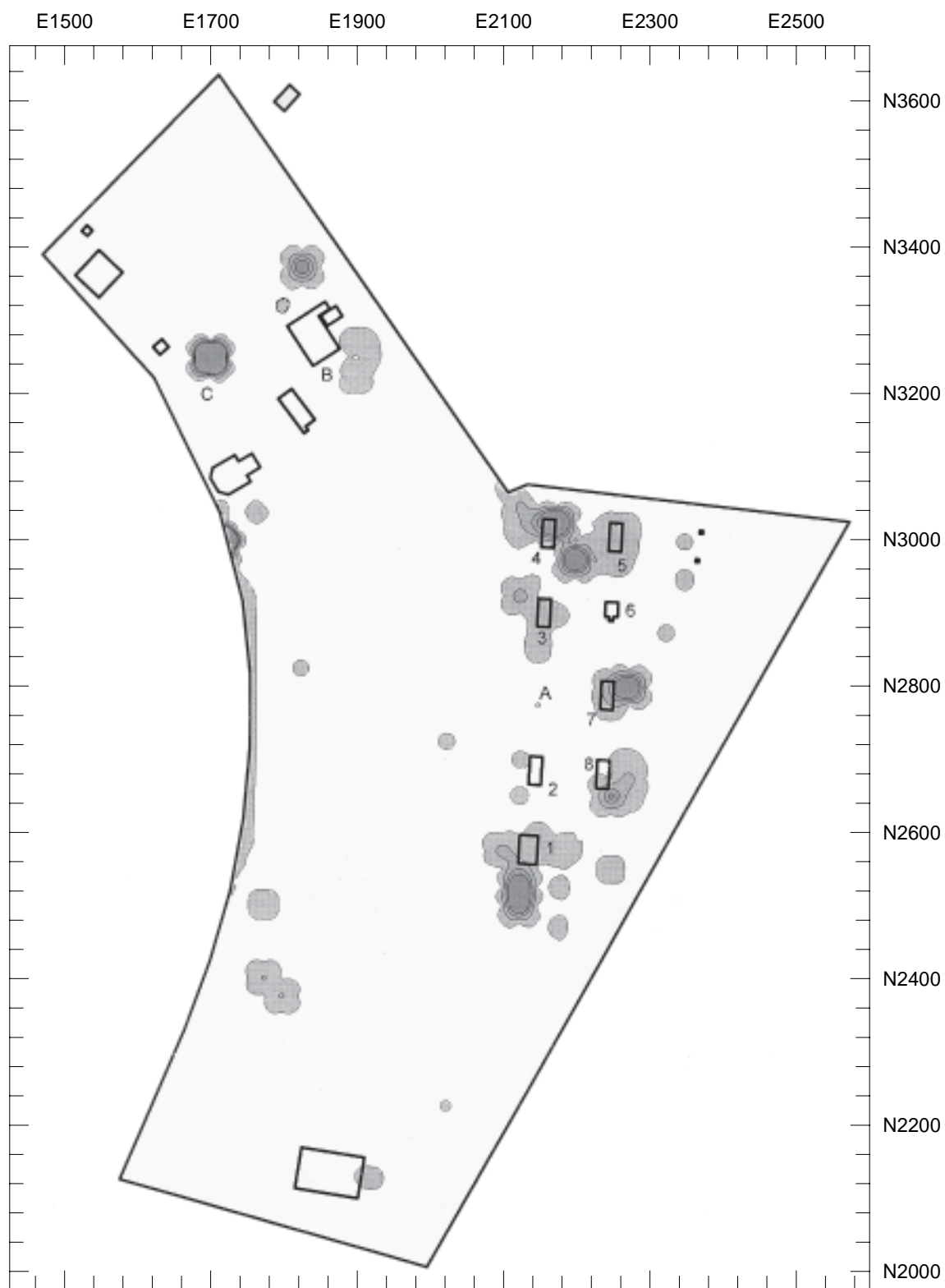


Figure 41 — Distribution of "Clothing Group" data.

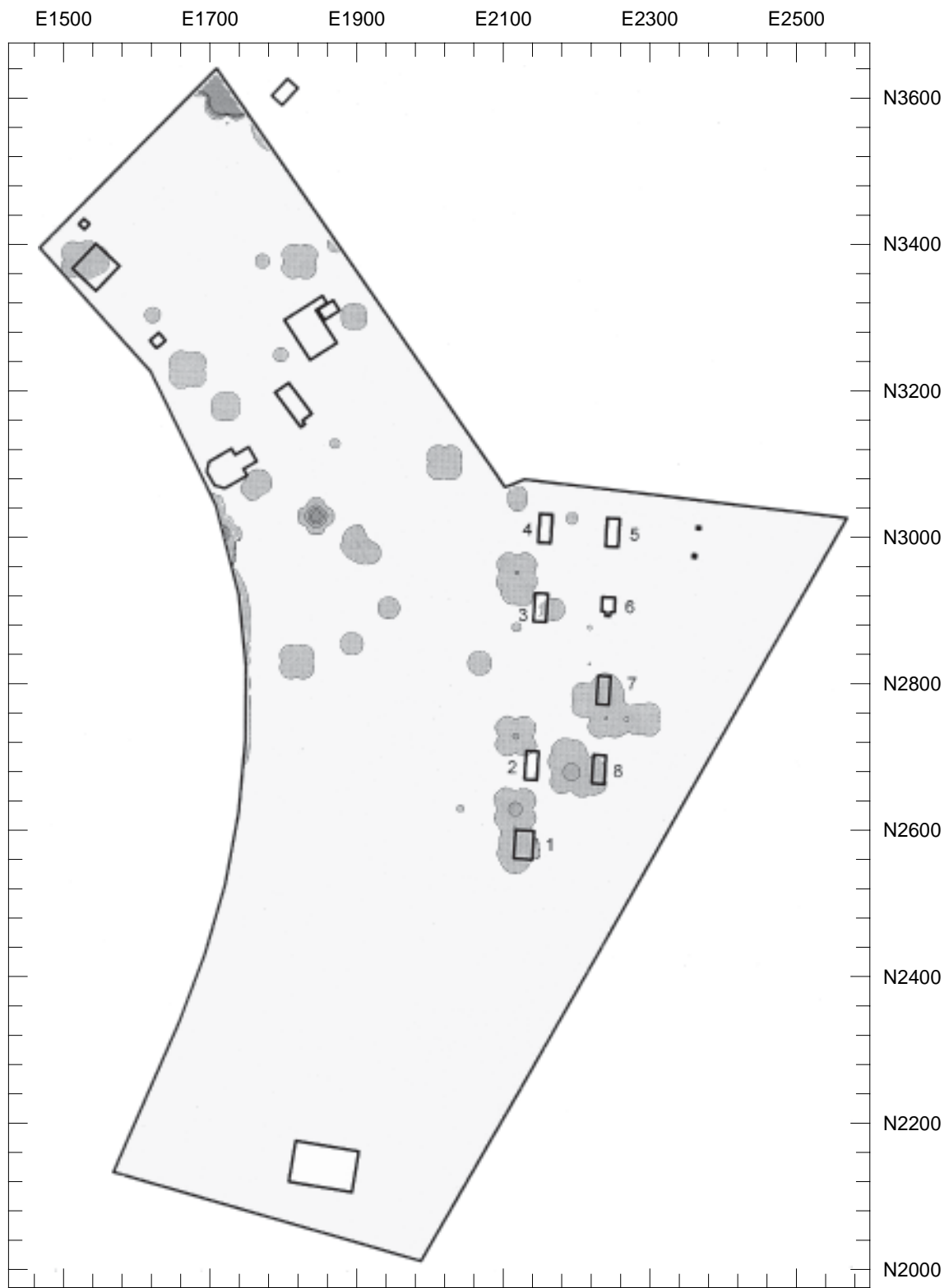


Figure 42 — Distribution of "Personal Group" data.

CERAMICS

Three small tin-enameled sherds were the earliest colonial ceramics recovered from Magnolia Plantation. They represent either English delft, French faience, or Spanish majolicas. In the local context, they would probably be associated with the mid- to late-eighteenth-century LaCour occupation of the plantation. Unfortunately, the lack of diagnostic attributes makes it impossible to place the artifacts in a specific tin-enameled-ware category, and the small size of the sample ($n = 3$) makes the collection useless for distribution study.

Creamwares began to appear on American sites by the 1770s. By the 1780s, pearlwares were present in the area, at least at Los Adaes (Gregory, personal communication 1997). Although manufactured until somewhat later, by the 1830s these ceramics were generally displaced in popularity by whitewares. Consequently, one might assume that the cream- and pearlwares are associated with the LaCour occupation. However, one cannot discount the possibility that the LeComte family

brought these wares to Magnolia. Such wares would have undoubtedly been used at their Shallow Lake and Natchitoches residences as well as during the early years of their Magnolia Plantation occupation.

We created maps for creamware, pearlware, and whiteware ceramics, which were recovered in sufficient quantities to provide meaningful distributions. Creamware (Figure 44) and pearlware (Figure 45) distributions are quite similar. They provide at least a hint as to which portions of the plantation were utilized in the early part of the nineteenth century. It is not surprising that they show similar patterning considering their popularity was largely contemporaneous.

Several concentrations of these wares are of particular interest. The area marked A in both Figures 44 and 45 may represent thin sheet midden remnants from the *Structure Group* areas shown as C and F in Figure 38. I have suggested earlier that C (Figure 38) may represent the remains of the Cottage Buard or some other early structure.

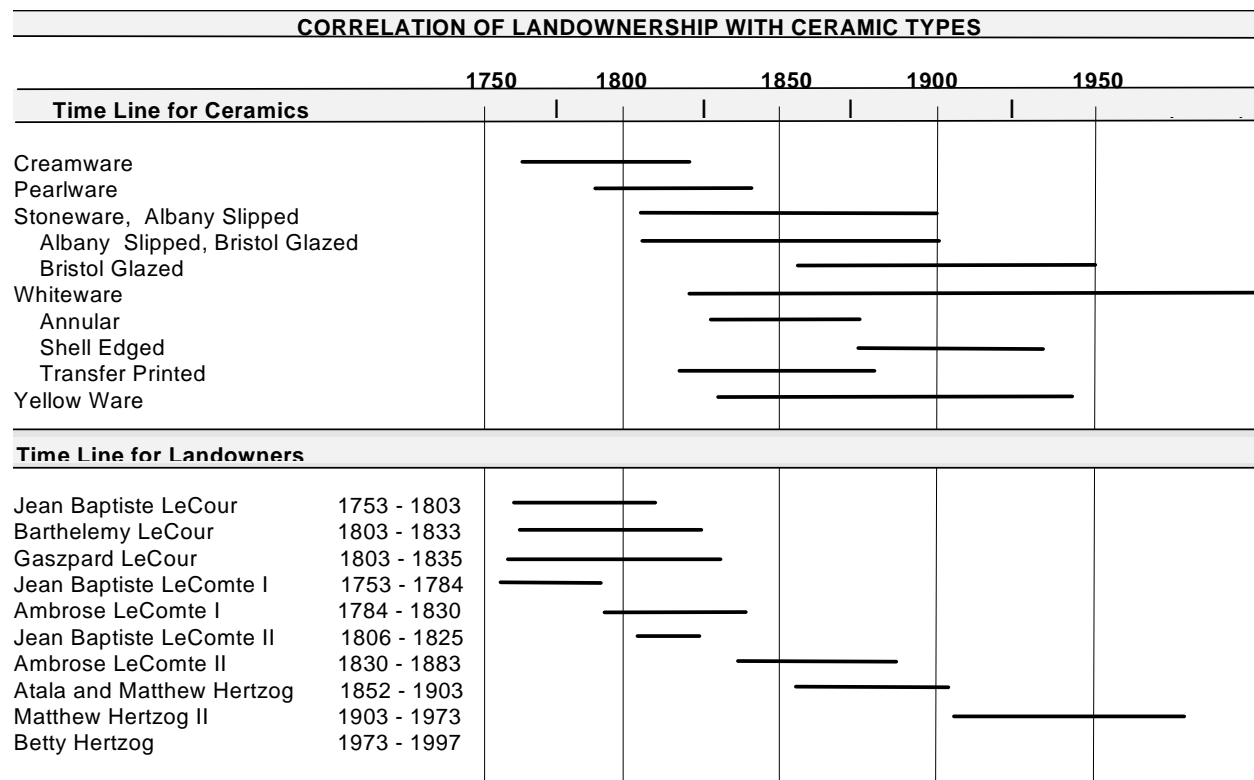


Figure 43 — Ceramic type chronology and ownership at Magnolia Plantation.

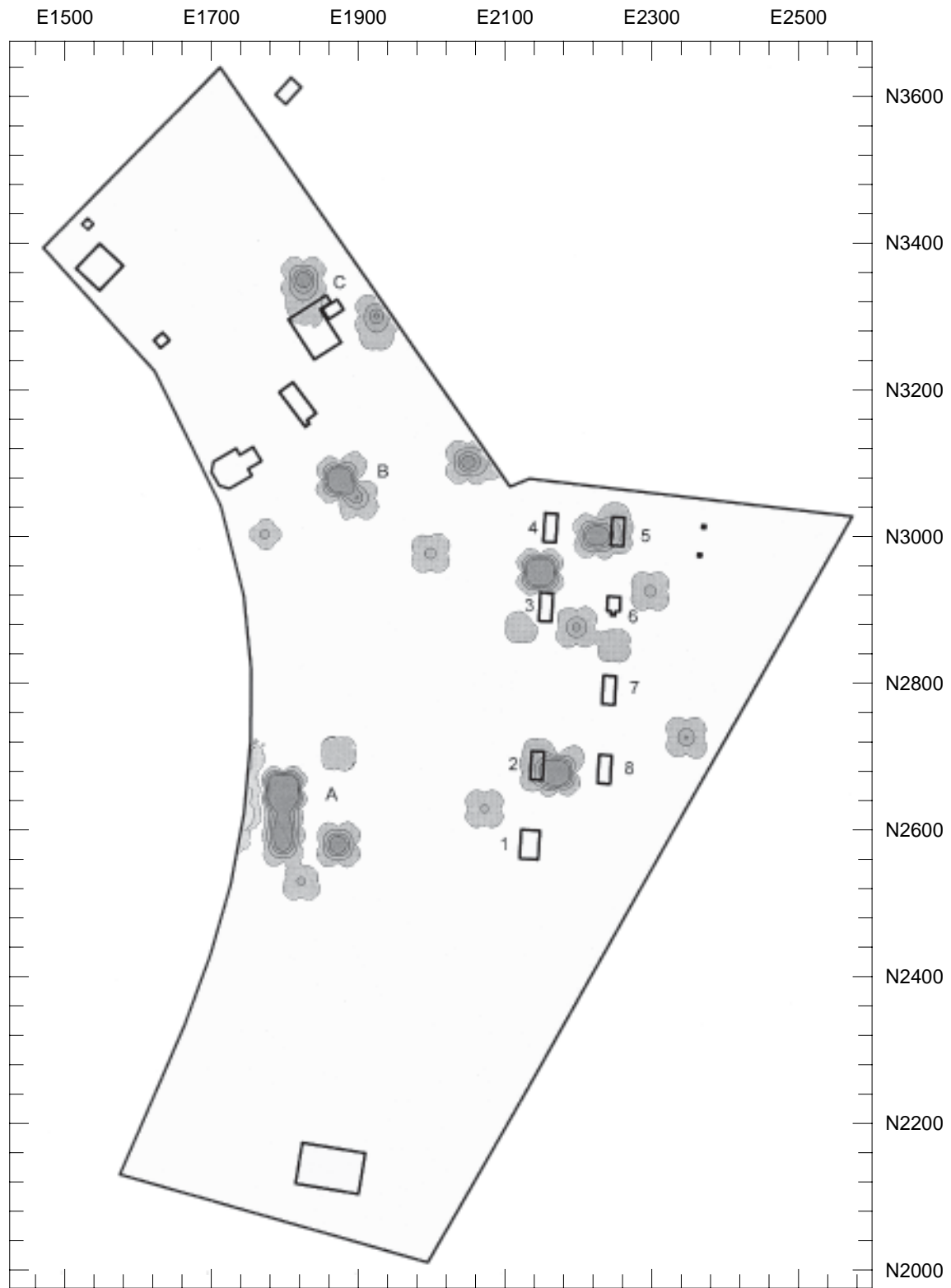


Figure 44 — Distribution of creamware ceramics.

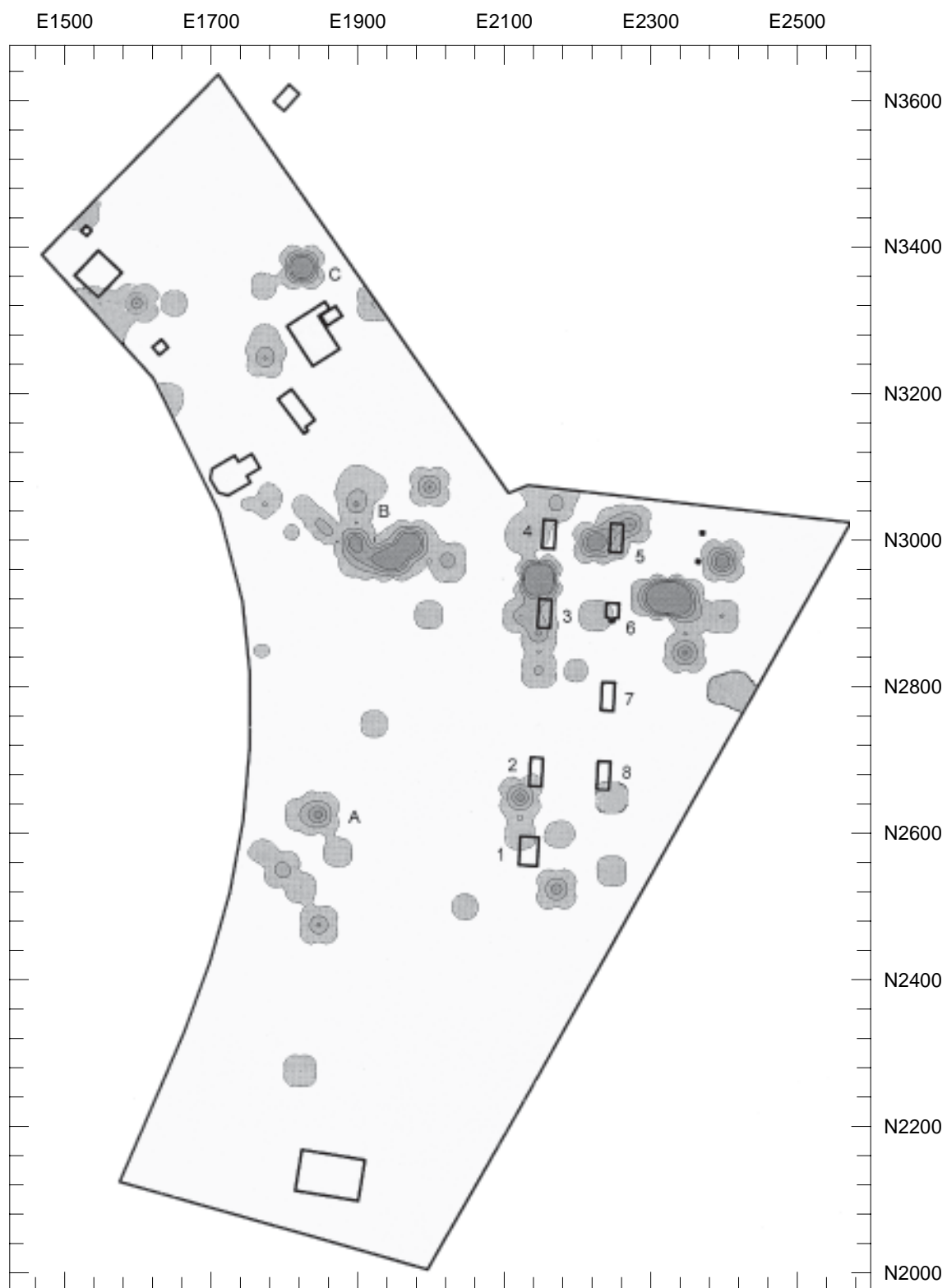


Figure 45 — Distribution of pearlware ceramics.

The area marked *B* in Figures 44 and 45 is centered on *Structure Group* materials marked *J* in Figure 38. I have cautiously suggested that this area may represent the site of the agency.

The area marked *C* in Figures 44 and 45 is in the northeast yard of the slave hospital/overseer's house. Finally, auger holes in the slave village produced some of these wares. One can account for the presence of these typically pre-1840 wares in the slave village as ceramics from the early LeComte occupation or perhaps even the earlier LaCour family presence on the plantation.

The whiteware distribution (Figure 46) gives as clear a picture as one could desire of ceramic distribution at a plantation created in the post-1825 period. Whitewares are numerous in the slave village (Figure 46, *A*), in the vicinity of the slave hospital/overseer's house (Figure 46, *B*), and in the area posited as the potential location of the agency (Figure 46, *C*), also depicted in Figure 38 as *I* or *J*. A concentration of these wares (Figure 46, *D*) corresponds with the area posited as the locus of a pre-Magnolia Plantation structure or possibly the Cottage Buard (Figure 38, *C*).

Finally, four maps based on ceramic type median dates were generated. They divided the plantation history into four periods: circa 1763–1833; 1840–1869; 1885–1905; and the entire period of the plantation's history. They are not presented because they shed no light on the chronological development of the plantation. In retrospect, this is not surprising since the comprehensive subsurface testing focused on the areas where domestic and agricultural activities were concentrated from the very beginning of European settlement.

NAILS

We attempted to develop pictures of the pre- and post-1890s' eras by creating maps of the distribution of cut nails (pre-1890) and machine-made wire nails (post-1890s). In some ways the patterns of concentration were quite similar, but the distribution of cut nails provided some subtle, interesting differences. For example, there is a fairly even distribution of cut nails across the area occupied by the slave village (Figure 47, *A*). However, the distribution of machine-made wire nails (Figure

48, *A*) is limited to the western half of the village. This pattern conforms to the plantation's historical record, which states that some cabins were torn down shortly after 1890 to salvage the brick for reconstruction of the Big House. Clearly, the virtual absence of wire nails in the eastern half of the slave village indicates that the cabins in this area had been torn down by the time wire nails came into general use (Nelson 1968).

The distribution of cut nails also provides evidence that the buildings posited from *Structure Group* evidence (Figure 38, *G–L* and *O*) represent nineteenth- rather than twentieth-century structures. The buildings may, with additional investigations, be correlated with structures shown on Walmsley's 1858 plat. They are unlikely to represent any of the structures built after Matthew Hertzog's demise in 1903. Cut nails were recovered, as expected, from around the slave hospital/overseer's house.

The nail distribution in the vicinity of the extant gin house is also of great interest. It calls into question the structure's actual construction date. Local belief has it that the standing gin house was built reasonably early in the history of Magnolia Plantation. The presence of the wooden screw cotton press in the gin house is pointed to as confirming the early (mid-nineteenth century) construction date. Several lines of evidence, however, suggest otherwise. The Historic American Engineering Record teams concluded that the ginning equipment dates no earlier than about 1890 (NPS 1997). Malone (personal communication 1998) recently discovered a *Natchitoches Times* newspaper clipping that cites the son of an overseer employed by Matthew Hertzog as stating that "Mr. Matt...built the new gin with seed house on the riverbank." No specific date for this construction was given, but, in the context of the article, the gin house must have been built in the early 1890s.

The distribution of cut nails (Figure 49) suggests that an earlier structure existed adjacent to the southeast corner of the gin house. Construction rubble (see Figure 18, Feature 13) and concentrations of *Structure Group* artifacts (Figure 38, *A* and *B*) support this hypothesis. In fact, these remains undoubtedly represent the structure contain-

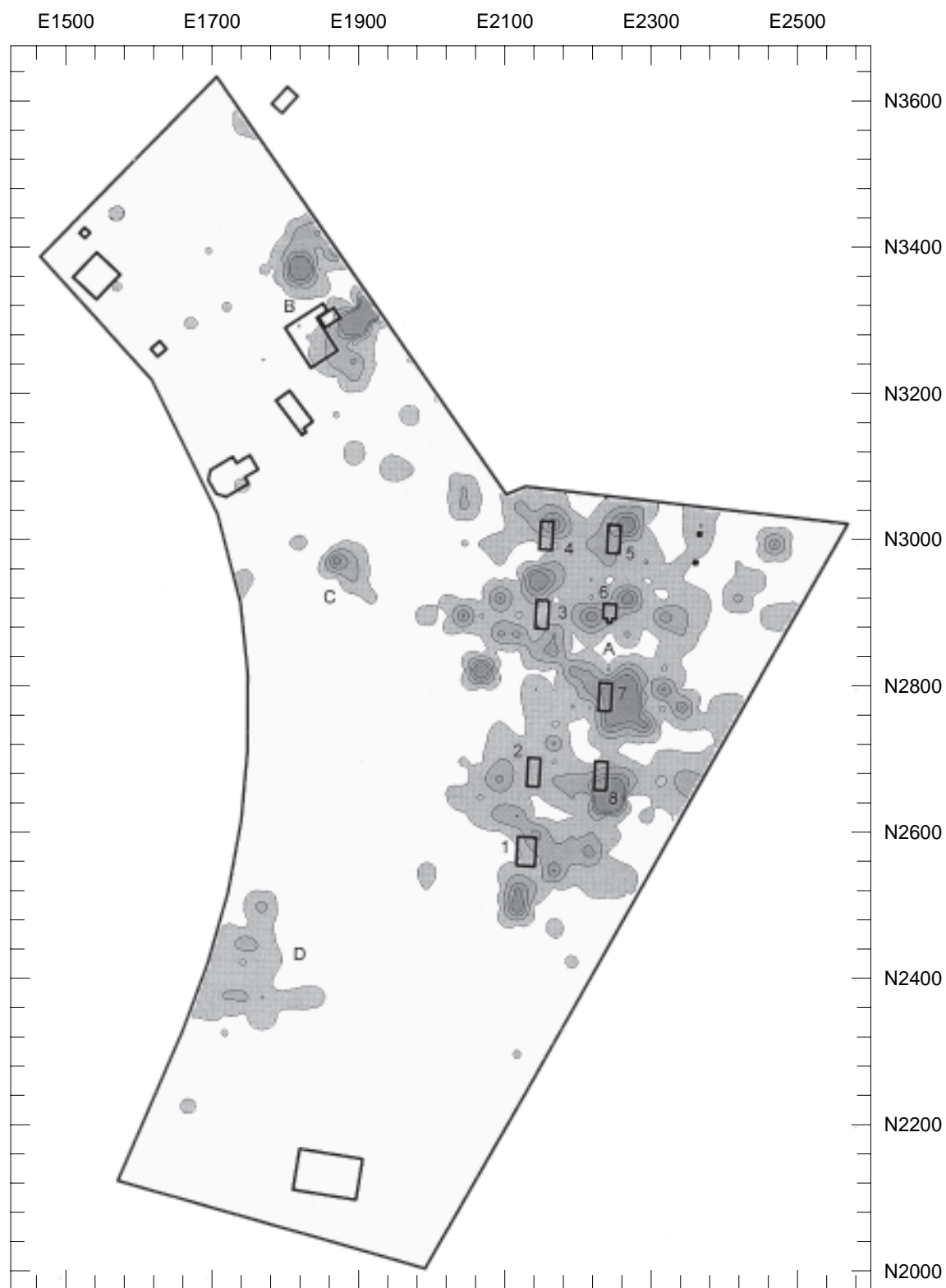


Figure 46 — Distribution of whiteware ceramics.

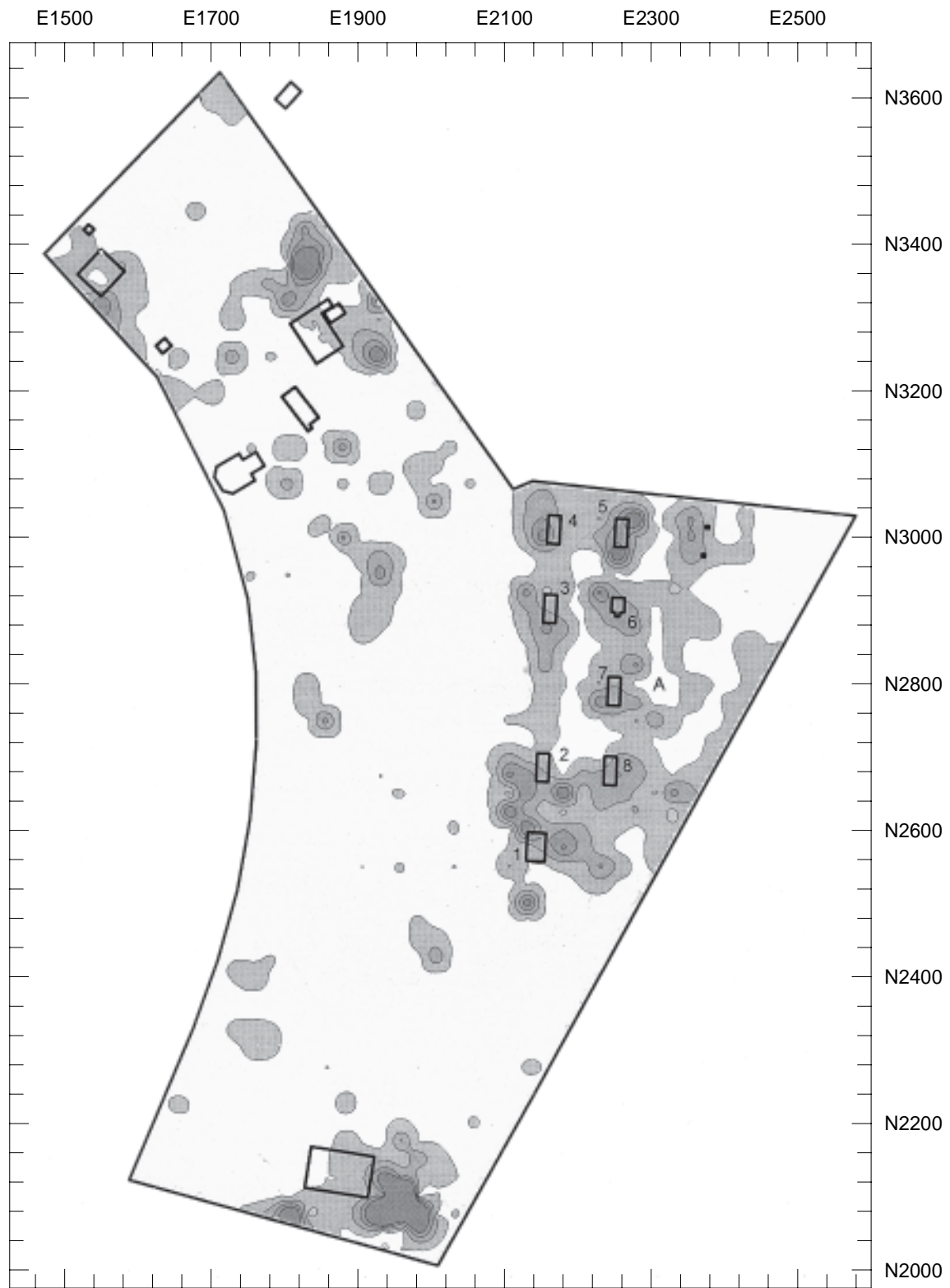


Figure 47 — Distribution of cut nails.

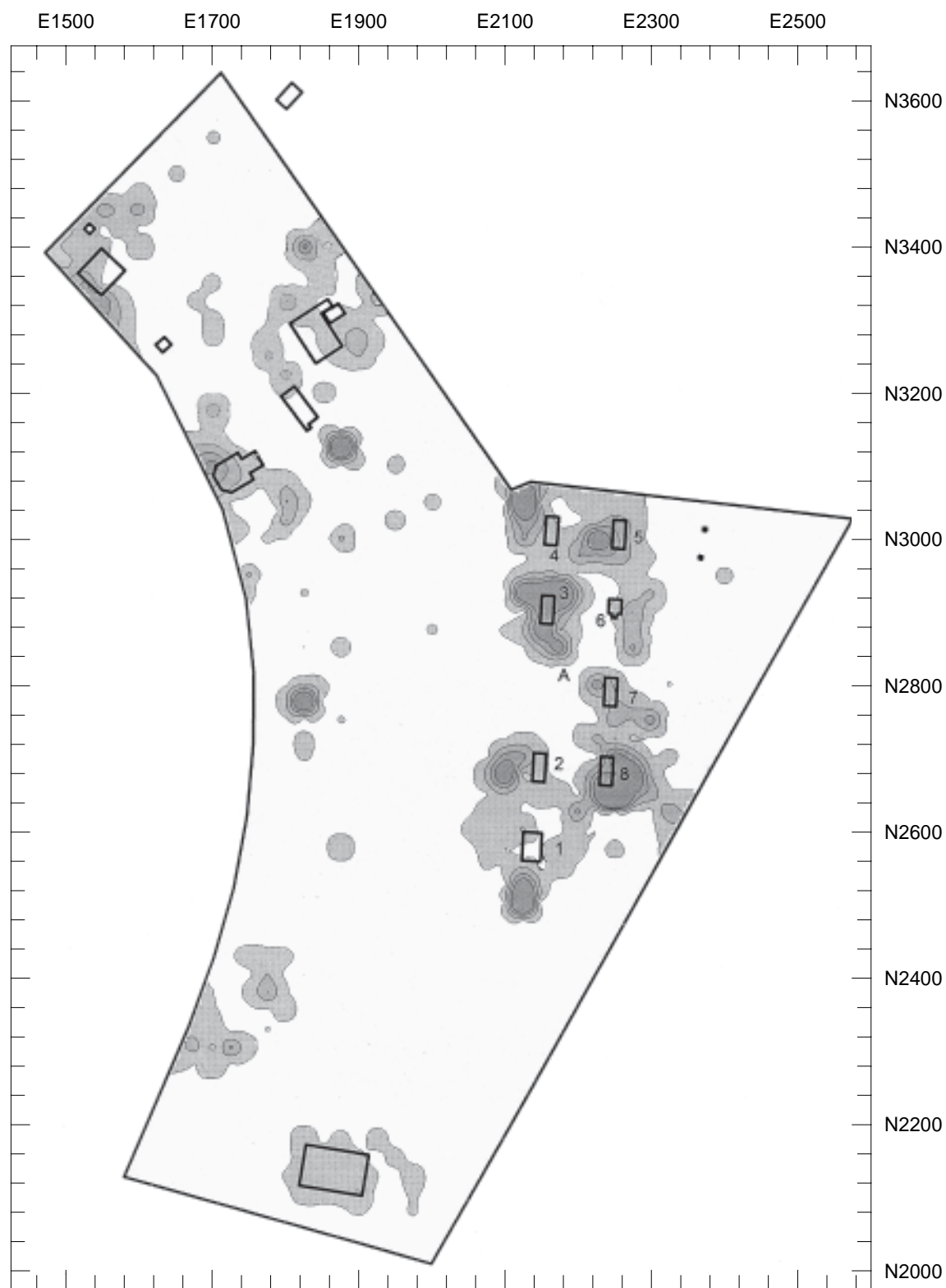


Figure 48 — Distribution of machine-made wire nails.

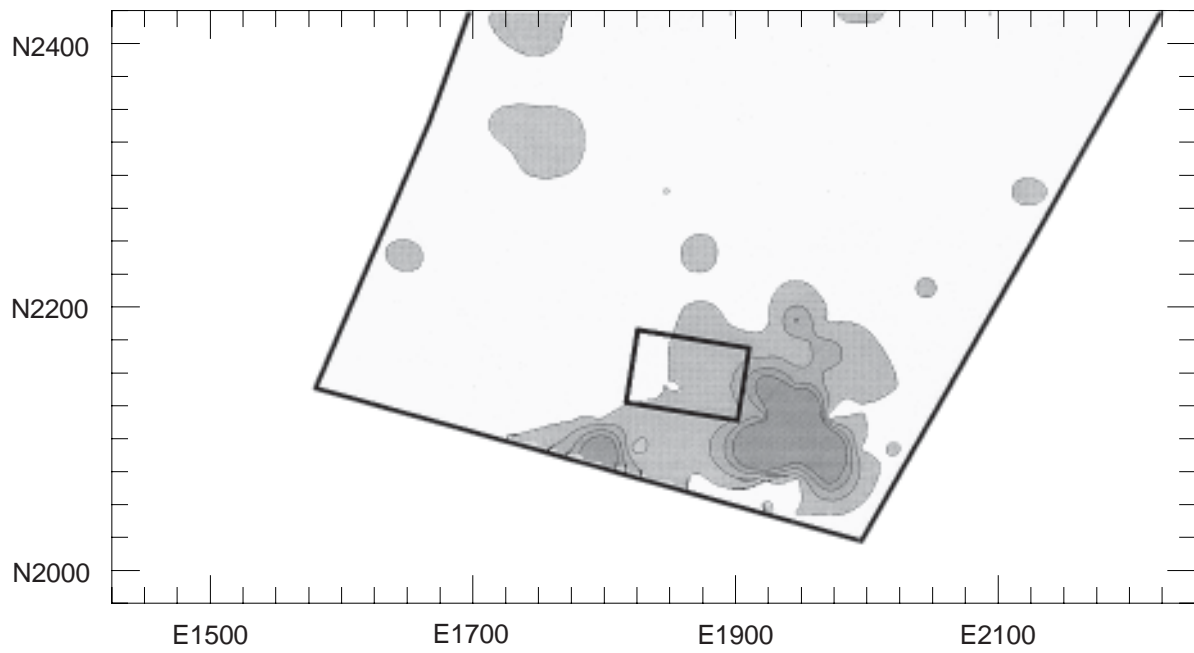


Figure 49 — Distribution of cut nails at the gin house.

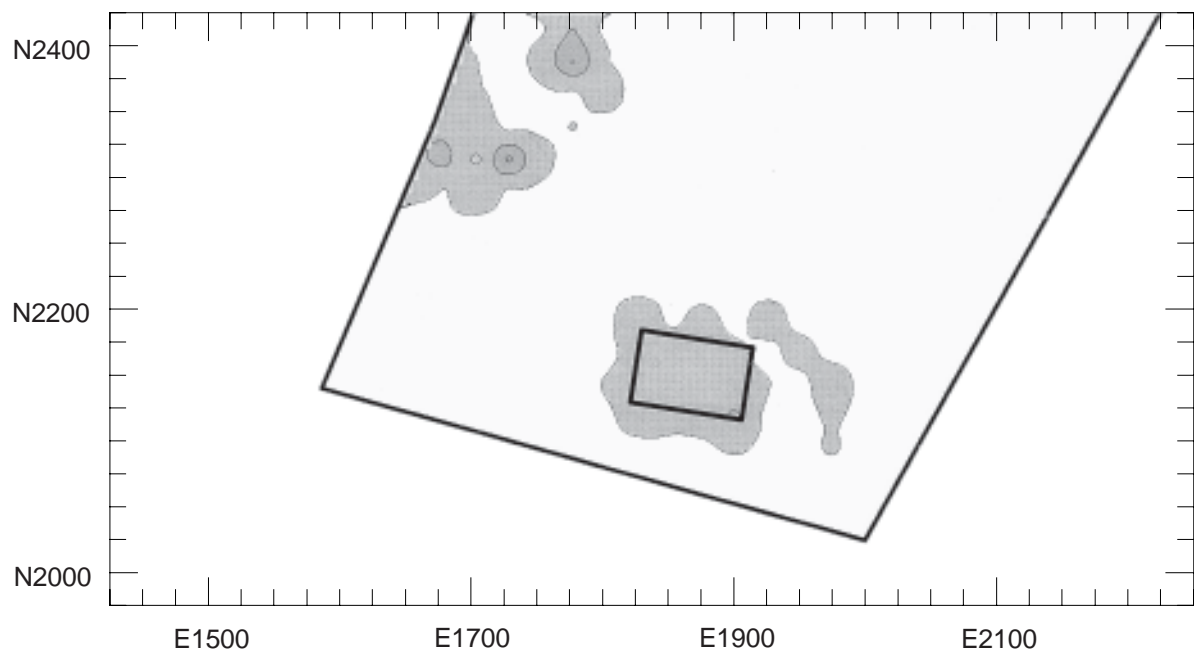


Figure 50 — Distribution of wire nails at the gin house.

ing the steam engine and boiler that once supplied the power to run the gin and press (Malone 1996, fig. 12). Furthermore, wire nail distribution centers on the footprint of the extant gin house (Figure 50). This distribution is consistent with the theory that the gin house underwent a major rebuilding episode after the 1939 tornado.

SUMMARY

The distribution of artifacts recovered from the 1996 investigations was studied by the creation of contour maps that arrayed the data occurrences within seven standard deviations of the mean of each of the analytical groups developed for this study. These distribution maps were examined from an archeological perspective and then compared to the 1858 plat and other historical information about the plantation. In the former case,

following the axiom of archeologist Calvin Jones, “The dirt don’t lie,” I attempted to let the artifacts and the context from which they were recovered have their own voice in expressing what they represented and could tell us about Magnolia Plantation. As we have seen, they answered many of our questions, hinted at other answers, but were silent on many problems.

A pair of transparent overlays scaled to the size of the distribution maps was created. One overlay depicted the current structures, the other depicted the structures and features as they appeared on Walmsley’s plat. Placed over the feature and artifact group distribution maps, these overlays allowed us to examine and compare the archeological data with both the present and the historic configuration of the site. This chapter presented the results in some detail. Some of the more important findings and hypotheses will be revisited in Chapter 6.



Chapter 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 1 of this report presented the statutory authority that created Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Cane River National Heritage Area and described the planning effort that guided the archeological research. Chapter 2 furnished a contextual overview of Magnolia Plantation, including the natural setting, history, and earlier archeological investigations conducted there. Chapter 3 described the field investigations conducted between May and July 1996 by the Southeast Archeological Center under the direction of the author. The analysis of the specimens and data recovered from a successful field season were described in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provided an interpretation of the findings. This interpretation attempted to let the archeology speak for itself. The determination of the presence of structure ruins across the plantation, for example, was based on the distribution of specimens and data as seen in a number of maps created using the Surfer surface mapping system. Subsequently, the pattern of structural evidence was compared to the 1858 plat of the plantation to see how well the archeological evidence fit the plat. Congruencies and near congruencies were identified. This chapter presents observations and conclusions, as well as recommendations both for additional research and for management of the important archeological and architectural resources at Magnolia Plantation.

OBSERVATIONS

The comprehensive subsurface testing program of investigations conducted at Magnolia Plantation was a success in that it produced one of the most complete archeological inventories of any unit in the Southeast Region of the National Park system. This inventory was completed by one of the most industrious crews I have had the opportunity to direct in my almost forty years in the digging trade.

In retrospect, there are a number of changes I would make in how we went about the fieldwork. First, the organization of the fieldwork would be more systematic in approach. Rather than initiating the testing program in the middle of the site, I would start at the lowest numbered grid point and move across the site in an ascending fashion to the highest numbered grid point. This approach would make record keeping easier to control and require much less labor in organizing the records, specimens, documentation, and analysis. At Magnolia Plantation, I allowed the height of the Johnson grass to dictate the starting point.

SEAC's analysis, cataloging, and accounting system is based on and conforms to the Automated National Cataloging System—the Service's standard. While it requires a tremendous amount of labor, it also provides the power to do the kinds of analytical work described in this report. Without the computer it would be impossible to have accomplished the work and produced the results described in Chapter 4. In the future, I will take greater advantage of some of the shortcuts in recording and loading data that came to my attention in the later stages of the laboratory work. I will also insist that data recording and data entry are checked for completeness and accuracy at shorter intervals. This will make correcting the database simpler and should help us avoid repetitive errors in coding or data entry.

Within the archeological community, there has been much discussion about the appropriate interval or spacing between test units. Among the State Historic Preservation Offices several "standard" intervals have been established—ten meter, twenty meter, or fifty feet, for example. The determination seems to be based on the premise that the interval should be smaller than the archeological resource sought. Also, SHPOs have established different intervals for site discovery and site evaluation. A common sense approach would be to bal-

ance the SHPO's determinations with time and cost considerations.

I decided that a twenty-five-foot interval would most likely reveal the configuration of the archeological deposits at Magnolia Plantation. This decision was based on three factors. First, my experience at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site showed me that this interval would be small enough to discover structural remains and activity areas. Second, the 1858 plat of the plantation indicated that the site plan and building sizes would be responsive to this approach. Finally, the available funds precluded the use of closer intervals.

At this point, we assessed whether the interval was too small and if sufficient data to understand the distribution of the plantation could have been collected by using a larger interval. We did this by generating a fifty-foot-interval distribution map for the *Structure Group* assemblage (Figure 51, right), which was chosen because it gives the single best picture of the plantation's archeological resources. We then compared this map with the twenty-five-foot interval map (Figure 51, left).

The comparison demonstrates that the twenty-five-foot interval provides a more exact definition of the distribution of archeological remains. The close interval testing suggests the locations of several structures known to be present on the plantation in the 1850s that would not have been revealed if the larger interval had been used. For example, the eastern two columns of slave cabins would not have been revealed. Also, the rather clear picture of the structures in the triangle formed by the slave hospital/overseer's house, store, and slave village and the facility along the park's north boundary would have been completely missed. Testing at the large interval, nonetheless, would have provided a beginning point to plan additional archeological investigations, although not with the acuity the closer interval testing program supplied.

From the Magnolia Plantation and Charles Pinckney projects, I concluded that a twenty-five-foot testing interval is the most appropriate to recover sufficient data for park planning and cultural resource management. This conclusion is true for core areas of plantations; obviously it does not apply to agricultural fields or wooded areas.

CONCLUSIONS

The comprehensive auger testing program provides an understanding of the distribution of archeological remains at the park. The analysis of the materials and the context from which they came (provided in Chapters 4 and 5) compose a corpus of information on which to base future archeological research, develop cultural resource management plans, and comply with the National Historic Preservation Act.

The investigations specifically provide the following information:

- The probable location of the structure housing the boiler and steam engine associated with the cotton gin lies to the southeast of the gin house. Architectural, engineering, historical, and archeological data all support the hypothesis that the gin house was built around 1890. It is possible that Matthew Hertzog II enclosed the wooden screw press in his new gin simply to preserve this reminder of the family's heritage.
- Archeological evidence suggests that the slave village was laid out in a grid pattern, four cabins across and six down for a total of twenty-four cabins. Made of brick, these cabins were formally oriented in the cardinal directions. The size and spacing of the cabins is quite consistent within the village, demonstrating that Ambrose LeComte II and Matthew Hertzog I had definite ideas concerning the housing of their work force. This planned slave community undoubtedly, at least in the minds of the owners, provided control over the worker population. It also served as a formal display of the owners' wealth and social position. This slave village was, no doubt, the finest in the parish. After the Civil War, the settlement pattern on southern plantations changed. Many freed people demanded their own plot of ground and residence. Consequently, the residence pattern changed from cabins arranged in rather compact formal layouts to one of single houses dispersed over the landscape along the roads.

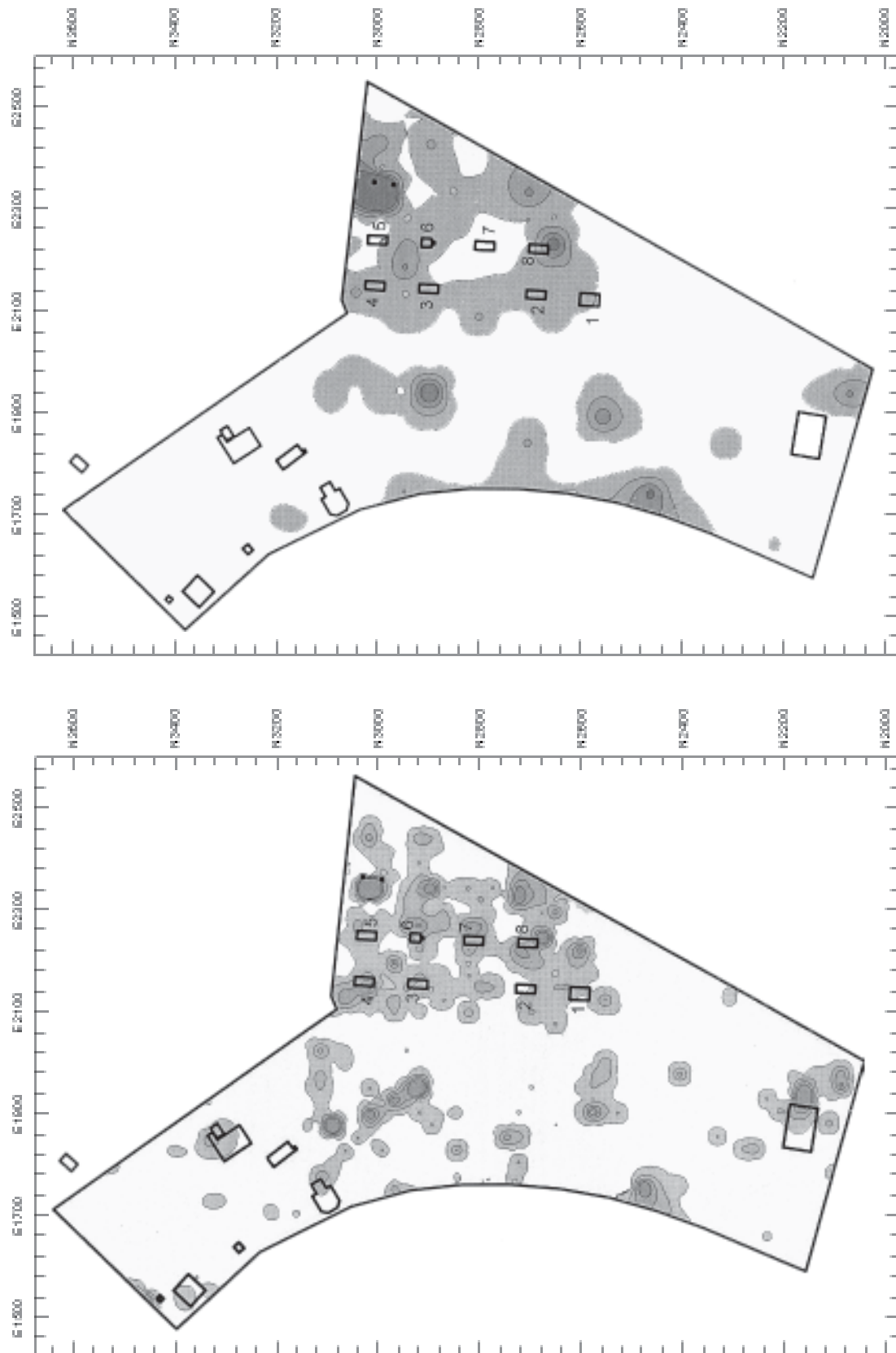


Figure 51 — Comparison of the distribution of “Structure Group” data at twenty-five-foot (left) and fifty-foot (right) testing intervals.

The archeological evidence from the slave village/tenant quarters is consistent with this changing demography. The historical record indicates that a number of the cabins were torn down to salvage the bricks for the reconstruction of the Big House. This demolition of the unneeded tenant quarters and the reuse of the salvageable materials is a clear example of the adaptive strategies the LeComte family embraced throughout its history.

- A concentration of *Structure Group* material (Figure 38, *G*), an in situ brick pier or foundation (Figure 17, Feature 34), and a construction rubble feature (Figure 18, Feature 33) are present approximately 150 feet west of Cabin 3. This site generally conforms to the position of the Nursery as mapped by Walmsley.
- A consolidation of *Structure Group* materials (Figure 38, *H, I, J, K, and L*) and in situ brick and construction rubble features are present between the slave hospital/overseer's house and the slave village. While difficult to interpret individually, these remains probably represent the agency, mill, pigeonier, bell tower, garden house, and an unlabeled building on Walmsley's plat. The presence of creamwares, pearlwares, and cut nails, as represented in Figure 38, *I and J*, strengthens the proposition that these concentrations represent the agency.
- A construction feature (Figure 38, *P*) is situated on the north park boundary. Additional archeological deposits were encountered during installation of the boundary fence in this area. These turned out to be of recent age.
- Finally, the investigation revealed a structure along LA 119 (Figure 38, *C*) that was not recorded by Walmsley. These remains may represent the Cottage Guard. The presence of in situ brick (Figure 17, Feature 4), construction rubble (Figure 18, Features 5 and 6), *Food Group* materials, cut nails, and whitewares suggests that there was once a substantial domestic structure in this area. Because the white-

wares are undecorated, they cannot help us determine a precise date for construction, use, and abandonment of this structure, which could possibly date as early as the 1830s.

Overall, the material culture recovered from the auger testing program at Magnolia Plantation is not of high exhibit quality. Generally, the items are very fragmentary and the majority of ferrous metals are in a state of rapid decay. Moreover, many of the items are of fairly recent age and not worthy of display.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The work SEAC has accomplished at Magnolia Plantation during these investigations provides the basis for three suites of recommendations to park management. The first group of suggestions deals strictly with archeological concerns; the second deals with park management issues that relate to the conservation of the park's archeological resources; while the third and final group concerns actions that the park should take to comply with NPS-28.

ARCHEOLOGY

Rather than frame the recommendations for additional archeological research at Magnolia Plantation as a set of concrete and specific activities, I have chosen to list them in the form of questions that relate to the development and operation of the park. The archeological research described in this report provides a comprehensive assessment of the buried resources at Magnolia Plantation. Investigation of these archeological resources can aid in the understanding of the plantation system in the southern United States during the nineteenth century. As mentioned earlier, there are several archeological research problems that the investigation of these deposits can illuminate. From the park management's point of view, however, there are a number of more important and critical questions relating to planning, cultural resource management, and development of the interpretative program that need to be answered.

- ***Can the structures shown on the 1858 plat be identified?*** There is a high probability that most of them can be identified. The auger testing program suggests that: the nursery, agency, and powerhouse for the cotton gin have been located; the plan of the slave village as it existed in the mid-1850s can be worked out; and several other structures found. With additional archeological research, it may be possible to correlate these remains with those shown on the 1858 plat. The lack of evidence for the Cottage Buard is perplexing, as is the presence of an unmapped structure along LA 119 northwest of the gin house. Did the auger tests completely miss the cottage? Could this structure northwest of the gin house relate to the LaCour residency at the site prior to 1835? Additional archeological investigations could probably answer these questions.
 - ***Can the function of the unidentified structures be determined?*** Do these buildings represent a dairy and a spinning and weaving shed as suggested by Malone? It may be possible to make these determinations archeologically, but a carefully designed research strategy would be necessary.
 - ***What can archeology say regarding the everyday domestic life of the slaves and tenants?*** Excavations in the portion of the slave village abandoned around 1890 will provide the best opportunity for obtaining data regarding both the daily lives of the slaves and the earliest period of tenancy. Carefully controlled excavations in the slave village/tenant quarters midden and cabin ruins should provide abundant comparative data on material culture, foodways, health practices, and perhaps religion and magic. Investigations here would also provide cultural material for exhibit purposes.
 - ***Where and in what configuration were the slave quarters prior to the construction of the brick cabins?*** The 1845 succession of Julia Buard LeComte indicates that only five brick cabins were present at that time, and these were under construction. Without additional historical information, locating the slave quarters of the first decade of Magnolia Plantation's existence would be problematic, even with a large-scale archeological investigation.
 - ***Given that the extant cotton gin house was constructed around 1890, what was the configuration of the earlier cotton ginning operation?*** It should be possible to recover enough data to gain some idea of what the 1850s' cotton processing facility was like. Archeologists would need the cooperation of historical architects and engineers to fully answer this question.
 - ***Can the age and function of other structures encountered during the investigations but not shown on the 1858 plat be determined?*** There is a good chance that additional archeological excavations and analysis could provide these answers. It is important to the park that these resources are better understood. On one hand, they may contribute to our knowledge of the operation of the plantation prior to the Civil War; on the other hand, they may be the physical evidence of adaptation to the postwar conditions of reconstruction and tenant farming.
 - ***Can the remains of the Cottage Buard be located?*** Ambrose Hertzog suggested that the widening and paving of LA 119 covered the cottage site. However, Betty Hertzog recalls from her childhood that the cottage was located further north. Her recollection is consistent with the archeological evidence. Additional excavations in this area could determine if the remains present here are those of a domestic structure.
- If, for interpretive purposes, answers to the preceding questions are needed, I recommend that a multiphase research program be designed. SEAC can assist the park in developing a Cultural Resource Preservation Program package to carry forward archeological investigations at Magnolia Plantation.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Currently, the two greatest threats to the archeological resources and some of the structures are vegetation and poor drainage. Action plans dealing with these threats must be sensitive to the archeological resources.

Existing vegetation, especially hackberry and mulberry trees, have adversely impacted extant structures. A number of mature hackberry trees are found both within the slave village and around the park. These trees spontaneously shed their branches as they reach maturity. Wind and the weight of rainwater, ice, and snow exacerbates this tendency. Falling limbs from the trees in proximity to some of the cabins pose a serious threat of damage. The trees in the slave village are probably not much older than fifty to seventy years, and, thus, were not part of the historic landscape. In fact, a 1923 photograph (Malone 1996, plate 30) indicates that cotton was planted “right up to” Cabins 5 through 8. The roots of both hackberry and mulberry trees in the slave cabin yards have hastened the destruction of the cabin foundations and the cistern walls. If the roots are not removed, the damage will continue at an accelerated pace. Vegetation has completely covered and infiltrated the cistern at the gin house as well as at the slave hospital/overseer’s house.

I am certain that the lack of proper drainage, coupled with the infiltration of tree roots, is adversely impacting the foundations of some of the cabins. Improving the drainage around these buildings without affecting the archeological deposits associated with them will be difficult due to the lack of local relief. The slope is less than one and half feet between Cabin 4 and the park’s eastern boundary—a distance of about four hundred feet. Even this gentle slope is interrupted by surface depressions.

I recommend that an aggressive vegetation management program be developed and implemented as soon as possible. This plan should include removal of the hackberry trees in close proximity to the cabins. If removal cannot be accomplished, these trees should be severely pruned. Although most, if not all, of the offending mulberry trees have been cut back from around the

cisterns and the cabins, new growth from their stumps is quite active. These plants should be treated with herbicides. Any attempt to remove them mechanically would severely damage the archeological deposits associated with the cabins and cisterns. Herbicidal control of the deleterious invasion of flora at the gin house and hospital/overseer’s house cisterns should be accomplished immediately. Herbicidal control is preferred because it is economical and does not disturb archeological deposits to any major degree.

It may be possible to correct the drainage problem in the slave village/tenant quarters and the ponding of water at other areas on the plantation by grading imported soil around structures and filling in the depressions. There is no source of fill material on site that is not archeologically sensitive or that would not create additional drainage problems.

In February 1997, the ruins of a row of four cabins was visible in the cotton field immediately north of the slave village/tenant quarters and the park boundary. Visual inspection of the cotton field east of the slave village/tenant quarters also suggests the presence of several cabin ruins. Our study of structure distributions (Chapter 5) suggests that the structures observed in the cotton field north and east of the extant cabins complete a neat formal community of twenty-four domiciles. Management should consider obtaining a boundary adjustment from Congress to expand the existing boundary by about five additional acres to incorporate the remainder of the slave village. This village comprises one of the most valuable cultural assets of Magnolia Plantation.

NPS-28 ISSUES

This report of the comprehensive subsurface testing program should provide adequate data for compliance with Section 106 for all future development and cultural resource preservation activities at Magnolia Plantation. It documents locations within the park of significant archeological remains consisting of relics of important historic structures and midden areas. Contextually these remains have sufficient archeological integrity for National Register of Historic Places listing. Their

importance as contributing resources to the plantation's historic significance is unquestionable. They would also qualify for listing based on their archeological merit as they would contribute to several important research topics. These topics include, but are certainly not limited to, historic landscape studies, questions about slavery and tenancy, and lifeways of the Creole culture in the region.

The data we have acquired should be sufficient to develop a Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Historic Preservation for the management of the plantation's archeological resources.

Finally, documentation should be prepared to update the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark designations to include the plantation's archeological component.



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Appendix

A Glimpse of Magnolia Plantation, 1851

During the early months of 1998, while inventorying Prudhomme family papers stored in the attic of the Oakland Plantation Big House, Dr. Ann Patton Malone discovered a number of documents pertaining to the Magnolia and Shallow Lake Plantations. She kindly shared a number of them with me, including the following seven letters written by W. D. Eddins to Ambroise LeComte II. Eddins was the Magnolia Plantation overseer from January 1851 until September 1853 (Malone 1996:58). The letters provide important, albeit brief, glimpses of Magnolia Plantation's past.

Malone first reported (1996:55) that Ambroise II's son-in-law, Matthew Hertzog, was running Magnolia to some extent after Ambroise II took up permanent residence in his Natchitoches man-

sion. In light of the newly discovered documentation, the change in management seems unlikely to have occurred before Eddins's death. The letters reveal that Eddins was entrusted with the handling of real estate and commercial matters. His reports on the condition of crops, the health of the slaves, and requests for medicine and supplies were addressed directly to Ambroise II. So too, Eddins makes no mention of Matthew or his wife, Atala LeComte, in his dispatches.

The letters also shed light on the construction date of the Big House. Family lore and other accounts set the date sometime during the 1830s. The letters dated March 21 and May 2, 1851, clearly indicate that LeComte's "new" house was under construction at that time.

Mr. Lacomte ~

Dear sir

we have no sickness now worth relateing on either side – except the Boy & Girl who were in the Hospittle when you were down & the Old woman – on the other side – the River – she gets no better – the Boy & Girl are mending – The Boy has the dropsy – the Girl has a brest complaint which will take some time for them to get well ~ As you requested of me – I attended the sale on the 29th ult – and Bought the piece of land there for you, adjoining your's above for \$1200.00 dollars. I informed Mr. Taber that I Bought the Land for you – so I presume you may arrange it now with the Sheriff without my further assistance – if you cannot – and it requires my presants there you must let me know ~ I received the articles – left at Boxton's Landing for me – by Hecla a few days ago by sending for them. As the Hecla came down this River this last trip ~ I received from her the articles for the plantation – all – as per Bill of Lading Except one Box of Merchandise which she didnot put out[.] Mr. Armstad shiped on her 85 Bailes of cotton (with this mark L-) For which One Bill of Lading was enclosed to J. B. Planche & Co the other he kept ~ I am well pleased at my plows – they do finely. I commenced plowing on the 29th ult – last Monday morning – I will finish plowing in my cornland about wednesday night – Armstad commensed plowing on the 20th I beleave – he is getting on very well ~ I think – I have yet about ten days Ginning I pressed out – to day 22 Bailes of second quality cotton

Yours truly

W.. B.. Eddins

Feb the 1st 1851 ~

Friday Night 8 Oclock

Magnolia grove March 21st 1851

Mr.. A.. Lecomte

Our Levee holds the water back well ~ The River has fallon here in front – about 7 inches – and back of the Levee about 12 in ~ A good deal of our corn Land was over flowed though I think if the River continues to fall – our Land will be all dry in the course of 6 or 8 days more ~ We have but 2 sick in the Hospittle now one belonging to this place and one from the other side – all appear to be in good health Except these two – and they are not sick much[.] we commenced planting cotton on the 20th Inst and will finish to morrow by 10 Oclock all above your new house we will commence to morrow morning the 22 Inst to plant corn – in the little field adjoining Mr.. Hertzog's place about 2/3 of the plantation on the other side was over flowed from the back part[.] Armstead has planted corn above the Quarters – and is now planting cotton On front b[e]low[.] we are almost entirely out of Medicine of all kinds – you will pleas send us some by James ~

Yours truly,

W.. B.. Eddins.

P..S..

we received to night at a 11 Oclock of the Hecla 47 lbs Pork – Cook told me that he put off 20 lbs on the other place making 67 lbs Recd by Armstead and myself so there are 7 lbs yet coming to make 75 as is marked on the Bill of lading, which they promised to pit out as they come down

W.. B.. Eddins

*Magnolia Grove Cane River
Mr A Lecomte,*

I have now to inform you of the death of one of your Negroes. Dannial the Black Smith from Armsteads side – he became sick on Thursday as I was informed. Dr. Scruggs happened to be there[.] Armstead got him to prescribe for him and give him Medicine – On Friday Evening he was brought to the Hospittle – with the prescription and Medicine from Dr. Scruggs. I examined him I found his tounge lightly coated white – his pulsts were agitated but did not indicate much fever. Though he complained of pain in his side and heaviness at his Stomac. I suspisioned at once that he had been eating something that he should not have eat[.] Consequently I had him locked up in one end of the Hospittle and continued the Medicine prescribed by the Doctor – Though it had no effect – Saturday Evening by operating on him with Clisters, I found that he had been eating ashes plentifuly[.] I sent immediately for the Doctor [;] he came[.] we done all we could for him But could do no good[.] he lived the Monday night and died the 24th Inst. All are well now and we are going ahead Planting[.] our corn land is very near all dry Though the water falls very slow The little Black Mair has got a fine Colt Folded [Foaled] on the 25th Inst.

*Yours Truly March 26th 1851
W.. B.. Eddins*

*Magnolia grove Cain River
April 26th 1851*

Mr. A.. Lecomte,

all are well and doing very well here except 3 who are complaining though not much sick – we have a fine stand of corn and also of cotton – we have hoed and thined our corn – and are now chopping out Cotton – The cut worms have not injured us much as yet though they are at work in several parts of the plantation[.] I have hered of several of the neighbors having to plough up and plant over Our scrapers do finely

*Armstead is geting on very well – he is I beleave done planting
Yours repectfully*

W.. B.. Eddins

Magnolia Grove – May 2nd 1851

Very Dear sir

I received from the L.B.. Hecla the Articles you sent as per Bill – and I shipped on Board of her the Remainder of your cotton which was 249 Bales 129 of which were marked in your full name and 120 marked – L – also 15 Beef hides for which I took two Bills of lading[.] one I kept the other I directed to J.B.. Planche & co – New Orleans[.] Agreeable to your order – Baptist will have the floor on the inside of your house completed I think by next friday – he has already laid the floors of the Entry closet, Dining room pantry, and one of the bed rooms[.] he has now but one large room and store room to finish[.] The shead you asked to have made for the convenience of your cooking stove is already completed – The tables Mrs. Lecomte ordered to be made – are made – Though the press is not – as yet – The timber having been got of green Chiney I thought it best to have it season a while before it should be made – the Matresses are all made and ready to use. The Negros are all well and doing very well except Ursin[.] he is worse off now than he has ever been before – and I have no hopes of his getting cured here – Though I think if you were to send him to Song's Chalybeate springs at Minden Claiborne Parish – to stay about three months – he would perhaps get well As I have no doubt the Chalybeate water would be beneficial to him – Our crop begins to look well – Though the worms continue to cut it down – but not so bad as they have been doing – I shall begin next week to putting my cotton to a stand and hilling it – we have been suffering here very much for want of rain – Armistead had to plow up and plant over a good deal of his cotton ground in consequence of the worms – and also When I wrote to you before – I thought perhaps you would be down in a few days – and I neglected to mention to you of the Burglary that had been committed by your boy Charles Natchitoches – On the Evening of Easter Sunday the 20th April he made it convenient to visit your new house and the way he proceeded to enter the building was by extending a ladder from the Ground to the floor of the back Gallery – up which he went on to the floor – he came to the last door on the end of the Gallery next to the Sugar Cain and (said) he found that door unlocked. he opened it passed through the room to the stairs – and down on to the lower floor he first went into the Clausit and then into the dining room and to the store room door which he found locked he passed then in to the pantry where he found the pantry key. he came back to the store room door and tried the key to the lock which he found to fit and unlock the door[.] he opened it and went in he took two liquor bottles (a small and large one) and, from the [illegible] he filled them with whiskey took 3 bottles of wine and two pieces of meat from the [illegible] and passed out locked the door replaced the key where he found it and returned by the same way he came in – This is a well done trick for Charles – Though he has the appearance of a thieving Negro – I did not think he had the impudence to venture so Boldly into such a place as that – I punished him for it though the fellow begged so faithfully and told me such a strait story of the way he had acted that I could not punish him as much as he deserved — Respectfully yours

W.B. Eddins

Magnolia Grove Cain River

Mr. A.. Lecomte,

On Wednesday Evening last we had a fine rain – here – which we were needing very much. the last planting of our cotton is coming up very regular – Baptist tells me that he will not have lime enough for your ditching – he says he will want about 80 lbs More – so you would do well to have it brought before the water gets to low in the River[.] on last Tuesday the 6th Inst we lost a little Negro. the child of Lucette. it had been sick for some length of time – and as I thought was getting well fast – at least the morning before it died it appeared prist and playfull - Ursin is getting better than he was – the rest of them are all well. Baptist commences this morning on the front Gallery floor – the floor is all finished on the inside. I understand by Joe that you have some [illegible] for me – which you will please send by James[.] Mr Taber tells me that you have a new Bell at Grandacore which might be brought in the wagon – that is if you will not have a chance of sending it in the Boat. Give my respects to Mrs. Lecomte and the [tell?] her that her Garden is doing well ~

Yours Respectfully

W..B.. Eddins

May 9th 1851

Dec 14th 1851~

Magnolia Grove~

Mr. Lecomte,

This is to inform you, that all are doing very well, here, except ch Hortence Cireaque & Jeanneah [?], who have been a little sick since you left, but are now nearly well – we have had a considerable shear of bad weather hear, so much so that we have not picked cotton but three days in the past week – Though we are getting on very well considering the stops and starts we have to make & take at it – we are done with the Levy cut & have the other picked nearly to the Judge stand – we think five more days of good weather will put us through the first time[.] we have two hundred Bales of cotton pressed and marked – Elwah came in with 17 heads of beaves – part of which I have picked up[.] Armstead – I beleave is done picking cotton, we are needing very much – for the Stable three good sized glass lanterns Which if you can procure you will pleas send by return of the wagon[.] yours truly

W.. B.. Eddins

